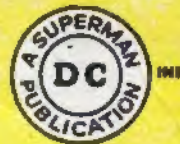


BATMAN
No.40

APRIL...MAY
TEN CENTS



BATMAN

BATMAN
AND **ROBIN**
ARE BAD LUCK FOR
THE **Joker**
WHEN HE JOINS
"The 13 Club"



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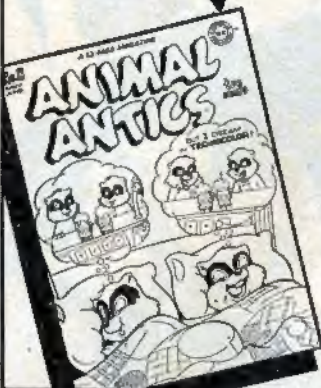


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OH, HIPPEY-HOP—
ONCE HE STARTS READING
HE JUST HATES TO STOP!
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHY?
IT'S REALLY QUITE CLEAR—
HIS GUIDE IS THIS SYMBOL,
GUARANTEE OF GOOD CHEER!



—ON THE COVER OF
**ANIMAL
ANTICS**
FOR EXAMPLE!
IT'S YOUR
GUARANTEE
OF THE **BEST**
IN **ANY** COMIC
MAGAZINE!

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Printed in U.S.A.

WITH
ROBIN
- THE BOY WONDER -

- THE BOY WONDER -

WHO RAISES ONE
RED MOUTH IN
THE LAW, THE
SARCASM, THAT
YES, IT'S AT HIS OTHER
CLOWN — THE NEFARIOUS CRIME
RETURN — **THE JOKER!** TO
LAUGHING TO GOTHAM CITY, HE
BECOME A PROPHECY OF EVIL?
BUT, IN ENDEAVORING TO
BRING BAD LUCK FOR
HE MIXES
HIMSELF — WHEN HE
WITH A STRANGE AND CONTEST
OF MADCAP CRIME
WHICH ENDS IN
VICTORY FOR—
BATMAN
"The **B** Club!"

EVENING... AND ALL GOTHAM CITY RADIOS TUNE IN ON A STRANGE, NEW TELEVISION PROGRAM...



11-12-13 RAPS OF THE GAVEL! THE 13 CLUB WILL NOW COME TO ORDER!

AND SO, TELEVISION AUDIENCE, BEGINS ANOTHER MEETING OF THE 13 CLUB, ORGANIZED BY LOCAL CITIZENS TO PROVE THAT BAD LUCK SUPERSTITIONS ARE NONSENSE. PRESIDENT RAY STANDISH WILL OFFICIATE...



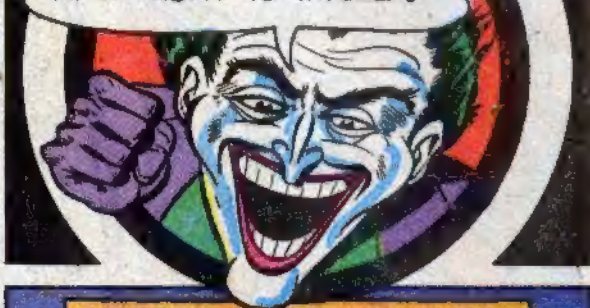
AS FIRST MEMBER, I WILL DEFEY SUPERSTITION—BY LETTING A BLACK CAT CROSS MY PATH!

HA! HA!



YES, IT'S THAT MIRTHFUL MONTEBANK—THE JOKER!

HA! HA! SO THEY THINK DEFEYING SUPERSTITION WON'T BRING BAD LUCK? AS SHAKESPEARE SAID, "JESTERS DO OFT PROVE PROPHEYS!" I, THE GRIM JESTER, WILL SEND THE 13 CLUB A PROPHECY THAT WILL MAKE THEM SUPERSTITIOUS—AT A PROFIT TO MYSELF!



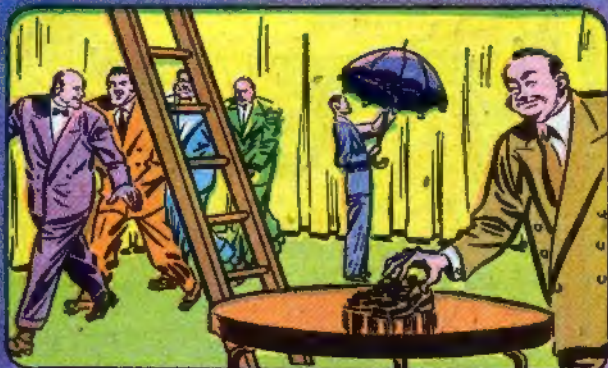
AND WHILE THE JOKER PLANS—JAMES BLANNING SPILLS SALT...



...AND GRAY, MARTIN AND JONES, STORE OWNERS, LIGHT CIGARETTES—THREE ON A MATCH... WHILE NICHOLAS NOBLE BREAKS A MIRROR!



WHILE THE JENNINGS BROTHERS, CONTRACTORS, WALK UNDER A LADDER... ED CHANDLER, OPENS AN UMBRELLA INDOORS, AND MILT BUNDY PUTS HIS SHOES ON A TABLE...



AND NOW WE PRESENT A MAN WHO DEFIED SUPERSTITION BY BECOMING OUR 13TH MEMBER... YES, WHAT IS IT, BOY?

PACKAGE FOR THE 13 CLUB! MARKED "URGENT!"



THE PACKAGE IS OPENED...

Since you invite bad luck, you invite me. An old superstition says that to be behind an 8-ball means black years - so, I send the 13 Club women!



THE JOKER! OH, MY!

WE'LL NEED PROTECTION!

GENTLEMEN! WE CAN'T ALLOW THE JOKER TO RUIN OUR CLUB! ORDER! ORDER!



I NOW PRESENT MEMBER NUMBER 13... HENRY—

NO! I RESIGN! I'M NOT SUPERSTITIOUS — BUT IF THE JOKER'S IN ON THIS — I'M OUT!

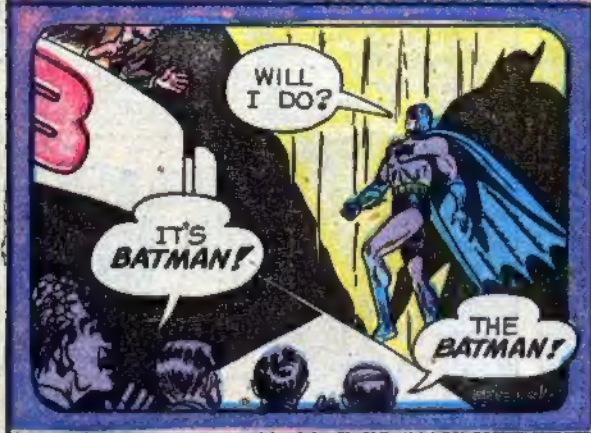


DESPERATE, STANDISH TURNS TO THE TENSE AUDIENCE...

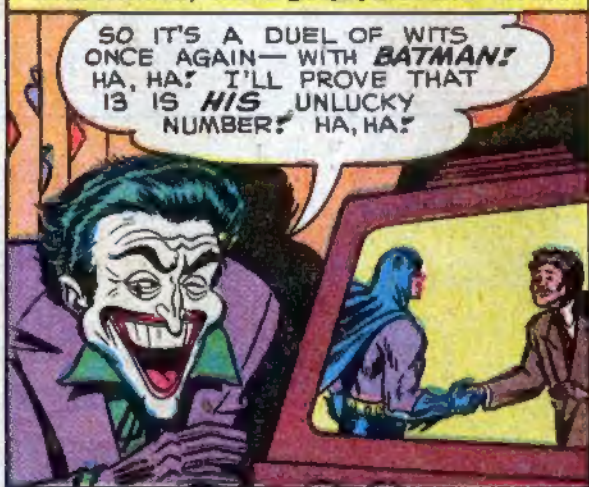
WHO AMONG YOU WILL BECOME MEMBER NUMBER 13? SURELY SOMEONE...?



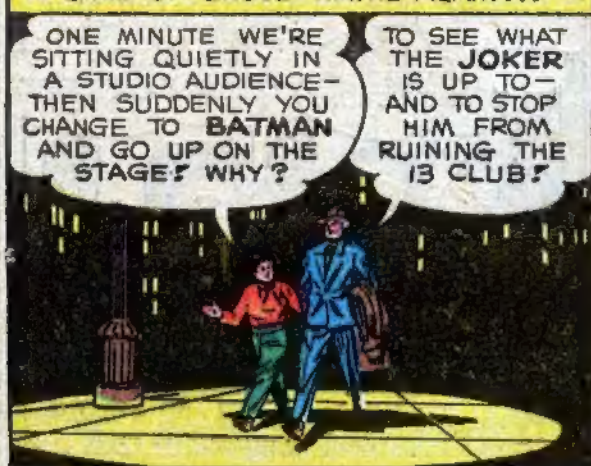
SILENCE! AND WITHOUT A 13TH MEMBER, THE CLUB IS A FAILURE! THEN A FIRM VOICE SPEAKS...



MEANWHILE, THE JOKER LISTENS IN...



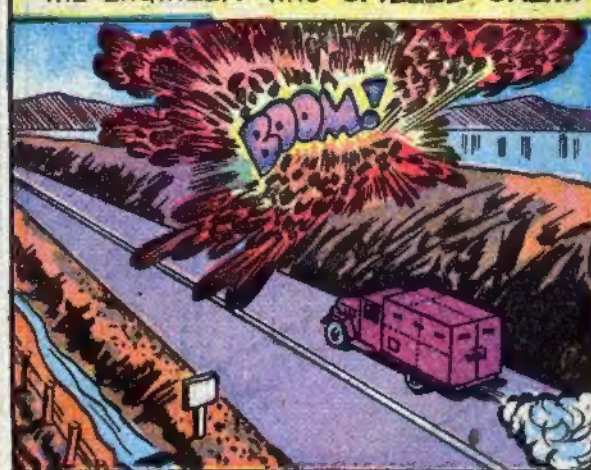
LATER, AFTER BATMAN DONS THE GARB OF BRUCE WAYNE AGAIN...



THAT NIGHT, UNINVITED GUESTS APPEAR AT THE STANDISH MANSION...

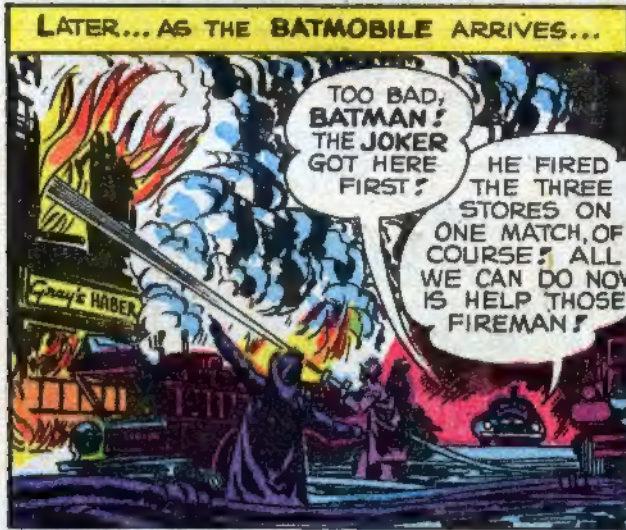


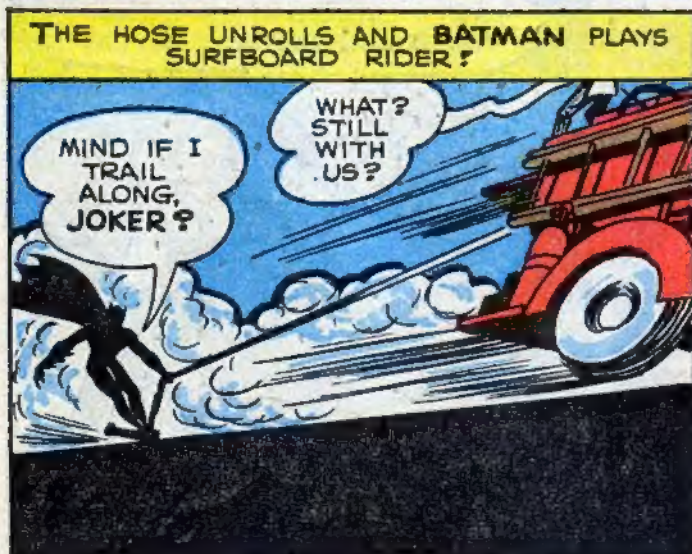
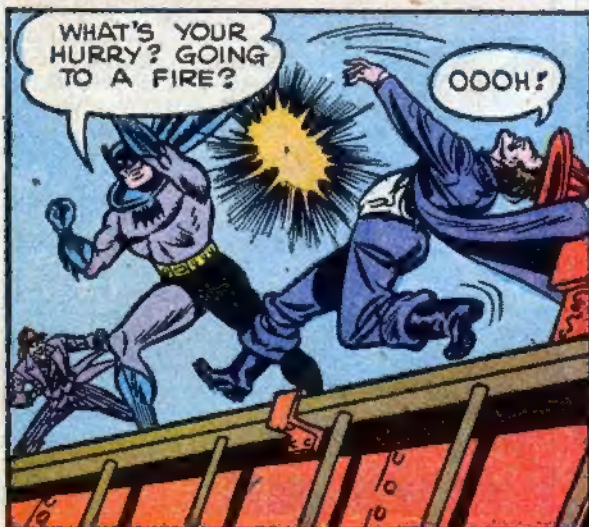
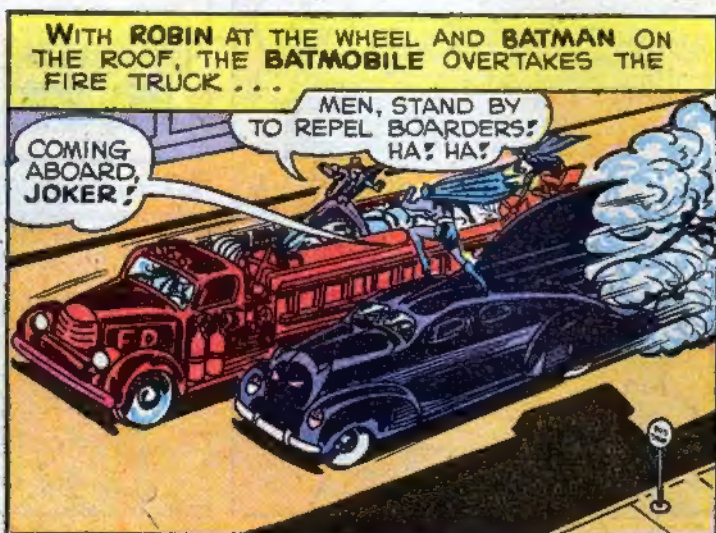
NEXT DAY, TNT BLASTS A HOLE IN A DIKE BEING BUILT BY BLANNING, THE ENGINEER WHO SPILLED SALT...

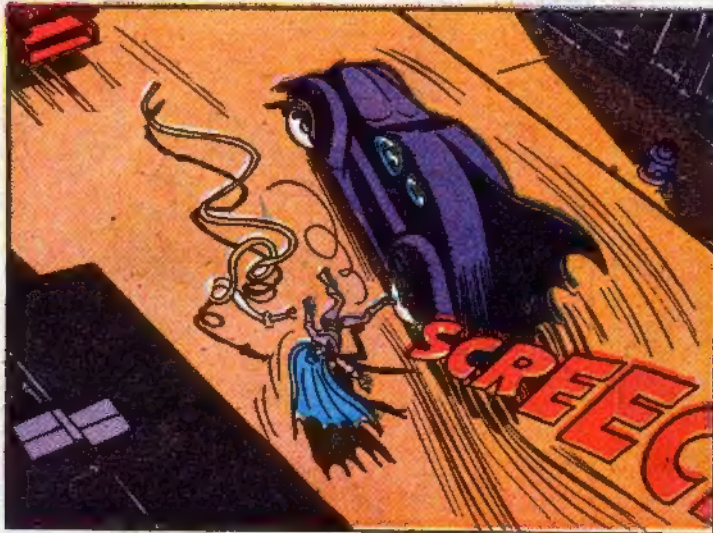


AND SALT WATER SPILLS FROM THE BAY, FLOODING THE ROAD AS A BANK TRUCK PASSES...









WHEN BATMAN COMES TO...

Y-YOU'RE
ALL
RIGHT?

OKAY... BUT MY
LEGS FEEL LIKE
BOILED
SPAGHETTI! THE
JOKER WON THIS
ROUND—SO LET'S
CALL IT A NIGHT!

MORNING—BATMAN AND ROBIN GO
TO THE STATE UNIVERSITY...

PROFESSOR NOBLE
IS NEXT ON THE JOKER'S
LIST! HE BROKE
A MIRROR!

HEY—
LOOKS
LIKE
EXCITEMENT
OVER THERE!

WHAT'S
UP,
FELLA?

OH... BATMAN! SOMEBODY
SET OFF A BOMB IN THE
ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY
AND CRACKED THE
MIRROR OF OUR
TELESCOPE!

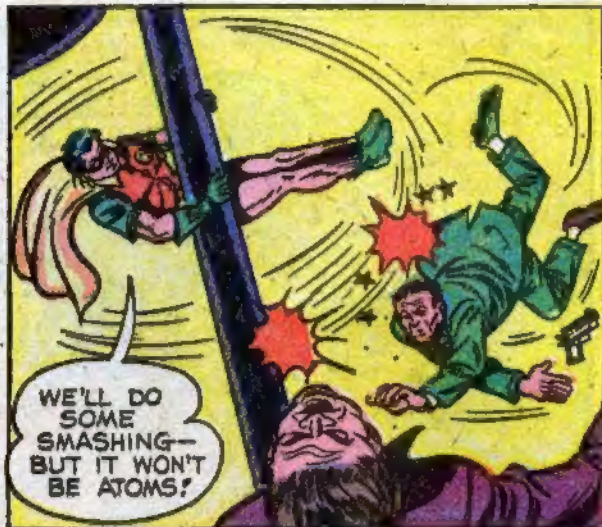
QUICK!
ANYTHING IN
THE OBSERVATORY
LIKE GOLD OR
DIAMONDS?

NO... WAIT—
OUR ATOM
SMASHER—
WE'VE BEEN
EXPERIMENTING
WITH
PLATINUM!

I AGREE!
THAT SMASHED
MIRROR SENT
EVERYONE TO THE
OBSERVATORY! SO
WE'LL BE ABLE
TO LIFT THE
PLATINUM FROM
THE ATOM SMASHER
LABORATORY
UNDISTURBED!
HA! HA!

JOKER,
YOU'RE A
GENIUS!

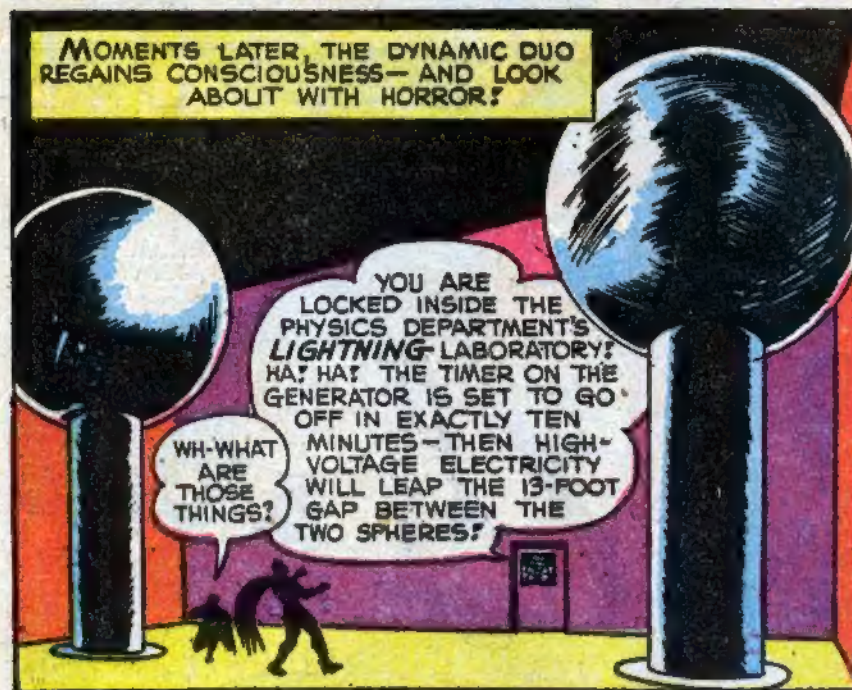
BUT THE JOKER GLOATS TOO SOON!



WHILE BATMAN TURNS TO MEET THE ATTACK OF A THUG, THE MADCAP OF MENACE SCALES THE TUBE'S INSULATORS...

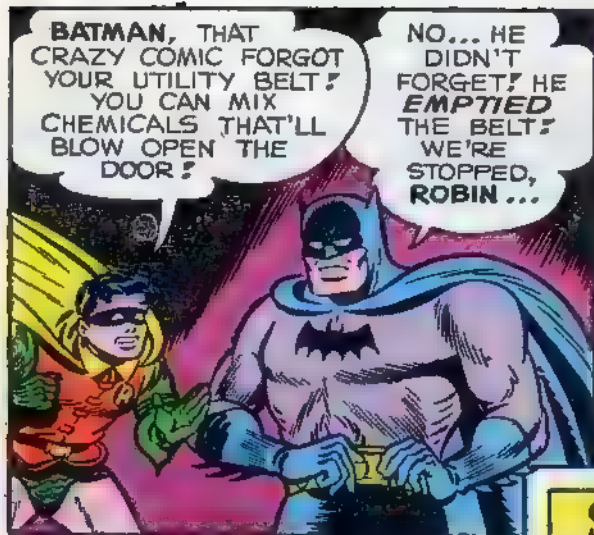


MOMENTS LATER, THE DYNAMIC DUO REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS— AND LOOK ABOUT WITH HORROR?



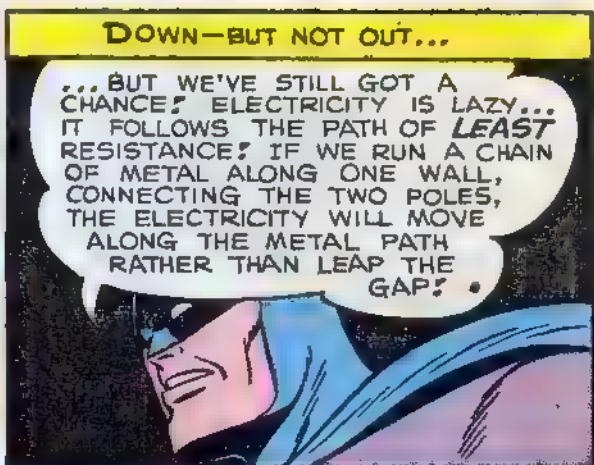
YOU'RE TRAPPED IN THE ELECTRICAL FIELD! THE SPHERES WILL THROW OFF LIGHTNING SPARKS THAT'LL BURN YOU TO A CRISP! GOODBYE, **BATMAN**— GOOD LUCK! HA! HA! HA! HA!





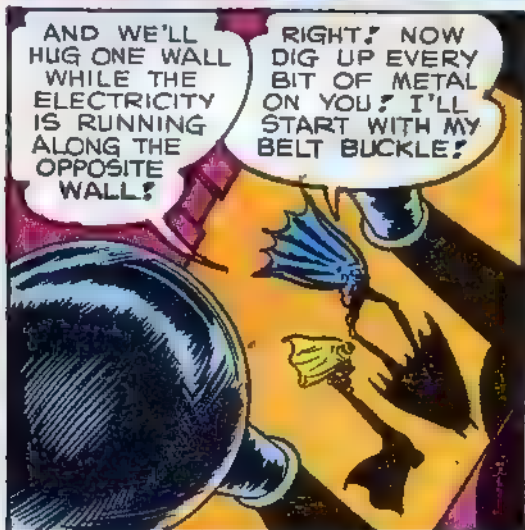
BATMAN, THAT CRAZY COMIC FORGOT YOUR UTILITY BELT! YOU CAN MIX CHEMICALS THAT'LL BLOW OPEN THE DOOR!

NO... HE DIDN'T FORGET! HE **EMPTIED** THE BELT! WE'RE STOPPED, ROBIN...



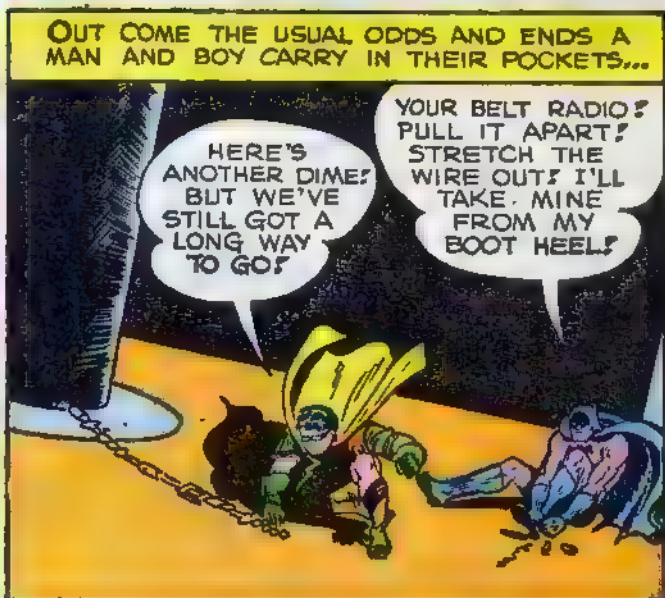
DOWN—BUT NOT OUT...

...BUT WE'VE STILL GOT A CHANCE! ELECTRICITY IS LAZY... IT FOLLOWS THE PATH OF **LEAST** RESISTANCE! IF WE RUN A CHAIN OF METAL ALONG ONE WALL, CONNECTING THE TWO POLES, THE ELECTRICITY WILL MOVE ALONG THE METAL PATH RATHER THAN LEAP THE GAP!



AND WE'LL HUG ONE WALL WHILE THE ELECTRICITY IS RUNNING ALONG THE OPPOSITE WALL!

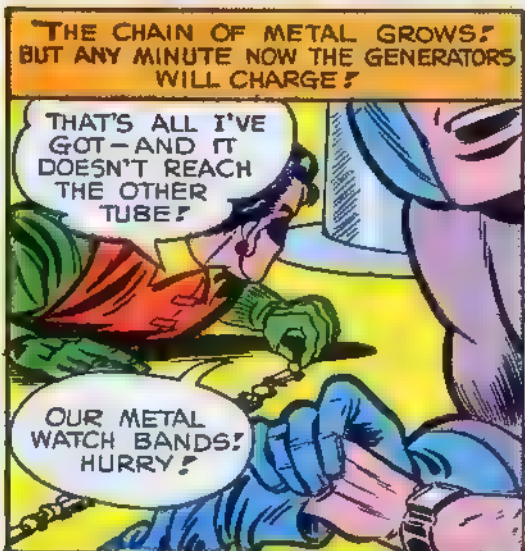
RIGHT! NOW DIG UP EVERY BIT OF METAL ON YOU! I'LL START WITH MY BELT BUCKLE!



OUT COME THE USUAL ODDS AND ENDS A MAN AND BOY CARRY IN THEIR POCKETS...

HERE'S ANOTHER DIME! BUT WE'VE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO!

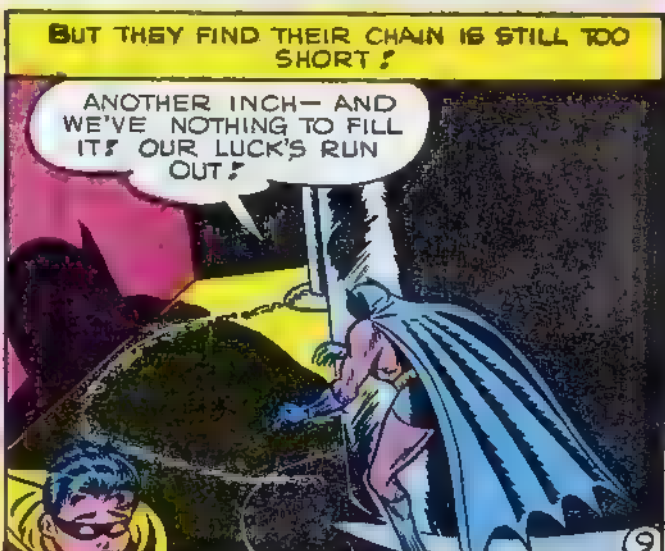
YOUR BELT RADIO! PULL IT APART! STRETCH THE WIRE OUT! I'LL TAKE MY MINE FROM MY BOOT HEELS!



"THE CHAIN OF METAL GROWS!" BUT ANY MINUTE NOW THE GENERATORS WILL CHARGE!

THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT—AND IT DOESN'T REACH THE OTHER TUBE!

OUR METAL WATCH BANDS! HURRY!



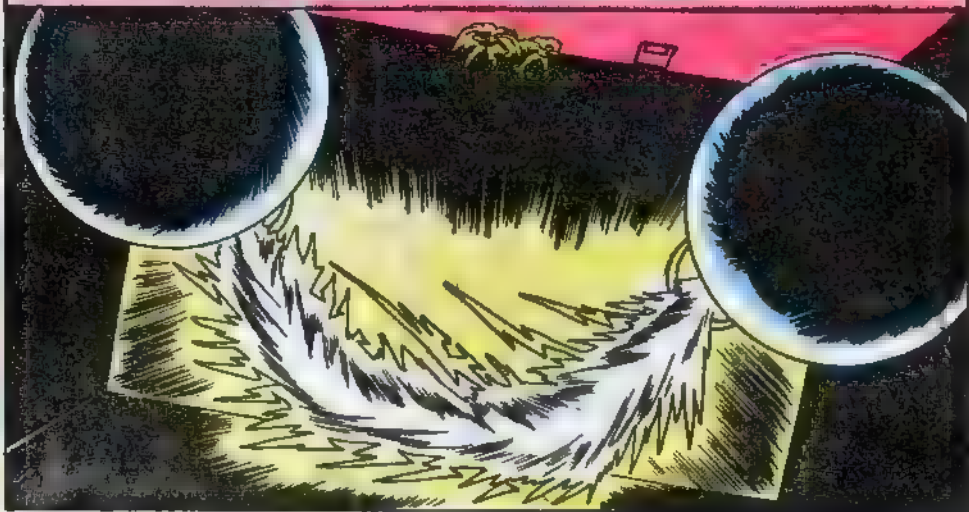
BUT THEY FIND THEIR CHAIN IS STILL TOO SHORT!

ANOTHER INCH—AND WE'VE NOTHING TO FILL IT! OUR LUCK'S RUN OUT!

NOT YET?
LOOK WHAT I
FOUND ON THE
FLOOR? A
PIN... AN
ORDINARY
STRAIGHT
PIN—THAT'LL
DO IT?

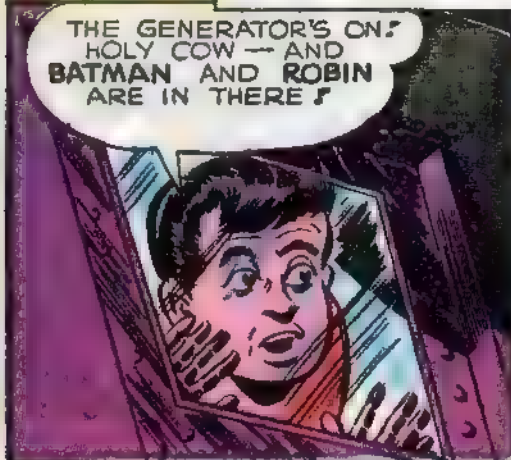


AND THE LITTLE PIN COMPLETES THE LIFE-LINE! JUST IN
TIME—FOR, THE NEXT MOMENT, A FORK OF FLAME
DANCES OVER THE METAL CHAIN!



AND AT THAT
MOMENT...

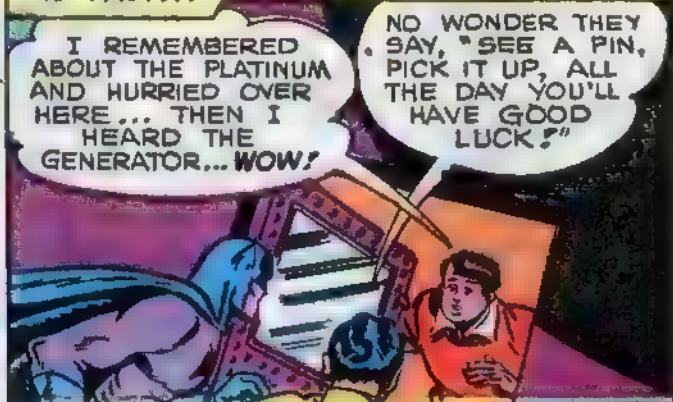
THE GENERATOR'S ON!
HOLY COW—AND
BATMAN AND ROBIN
ARE IN THERE!



THE SWITCH IS THROWN AND THE DANGER
IS PAST...

I REMEMBERED
ABOUT THE PLATINUM
AND HURRIED OVER
HERE... THEN I
HEARD THE
GENERATOR... WOW!

NO WONDER THEY
SAY, "SEE A PIN,
PICK IT UP, ALL
THE DAY YOU'LL
HAVE GOOD
LUCK!"

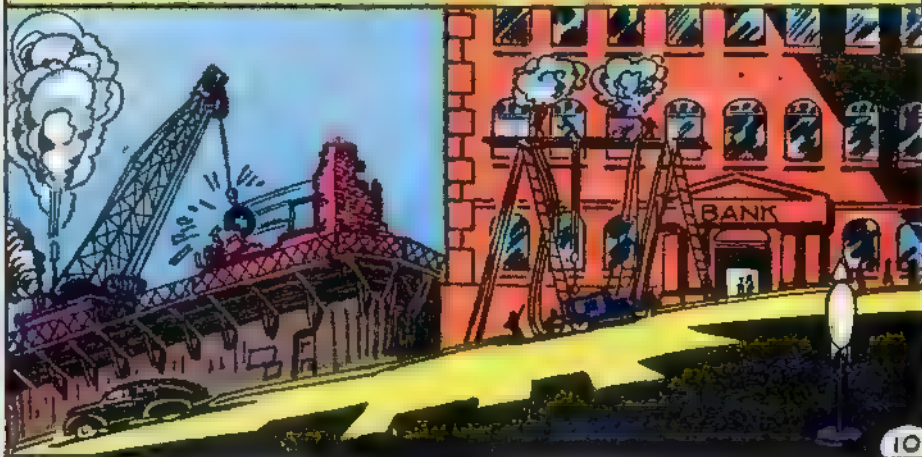


LATER...

IF OUR LUCK
HOLDS, WE
CAN CATCH THE
JOKER WORKING
ON THE
JENNINGS
BROTHERS!
REMEMBER—
THEY WALKED
UNDER A
LADDER!



SIDE BY SIDE ARE TWO CONTRACTING JOBS BEING DONE
BY THE JENNINGS BROTHERS—A SANDBLASTING AND
A HOUSE-WRECKING JOB!

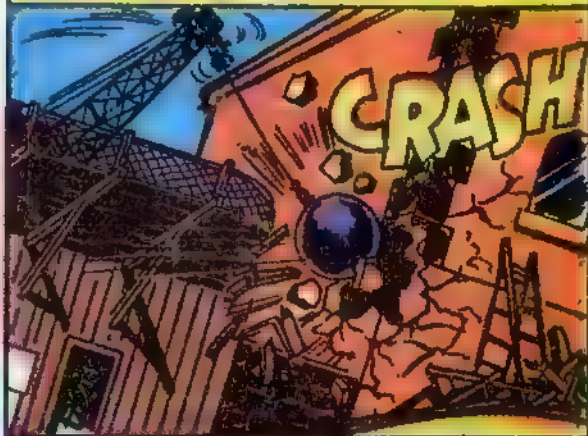




SUDDENLY, A DRIVERLESS CAR HURTTLES DOWN THE STEEP HILL, SMASHES INTO THE LADDERS SUPPORTING THE SANDBLASTERS?

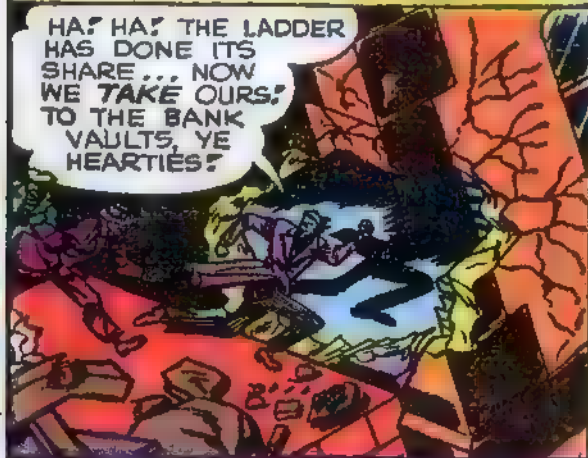


AND IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION, THE JOKER GETS CONTROL OF THE WRECKING DERRICK?

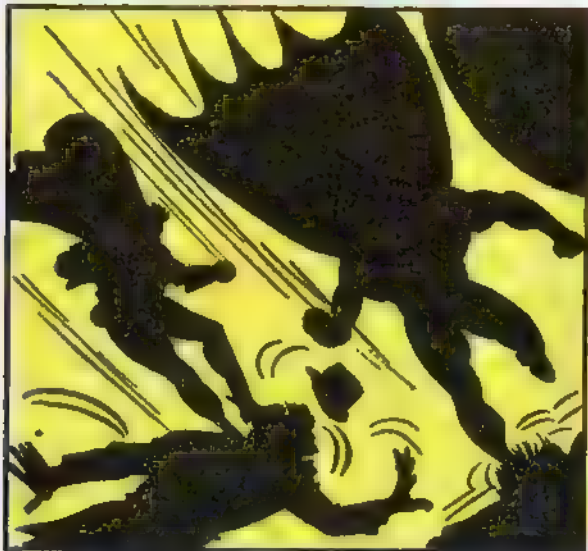
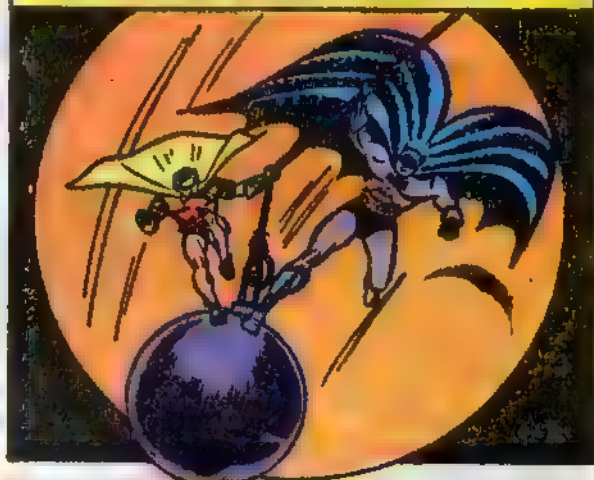


THEN THE HARLEQUIN OF HATE AND HIS PACK ENTER THE BANK...

HA! HA! THE LADDER HAS DONE ITS SHARE... NOW WE TAKE OURS! TO THE BANK VAULTS, YE HEARTIES!



WHILE, OVERHEAD, TWO MANTLED AVENGING ANGELS APPROACH...

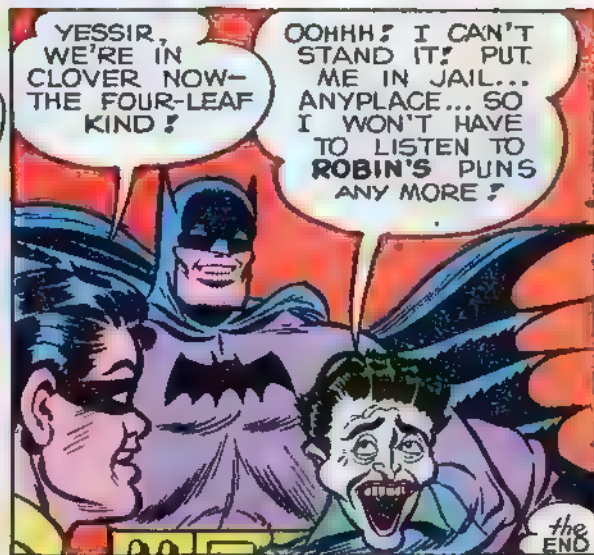
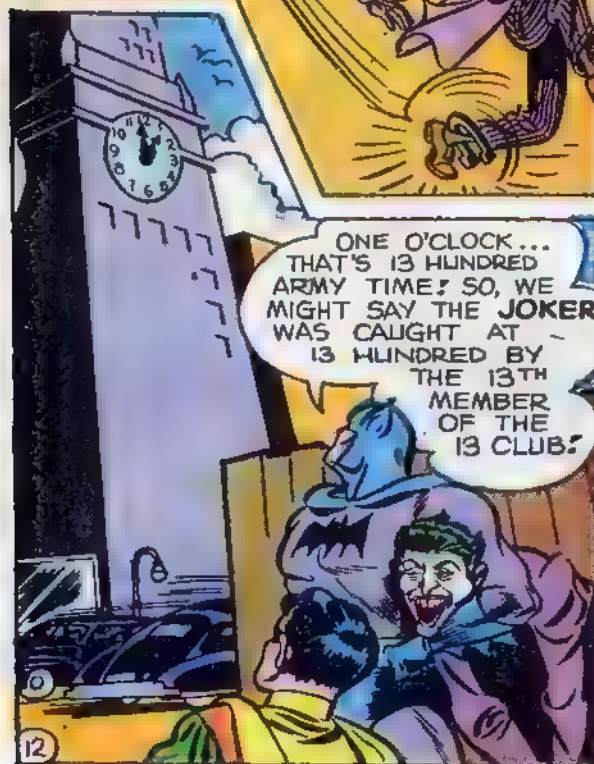
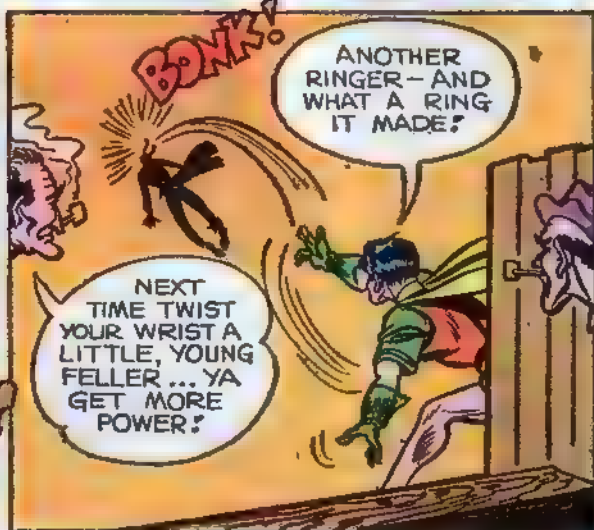
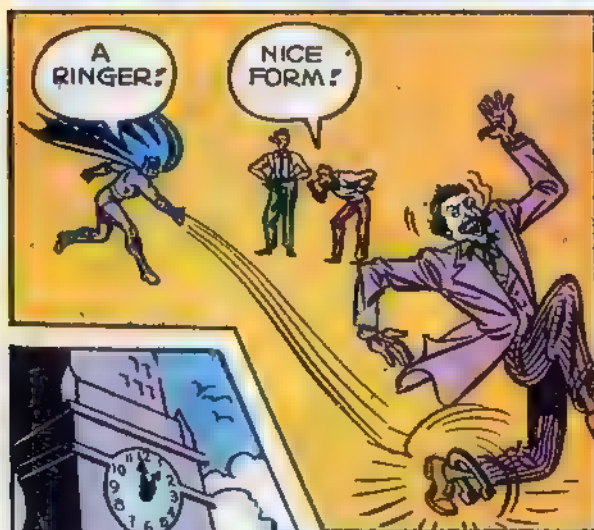
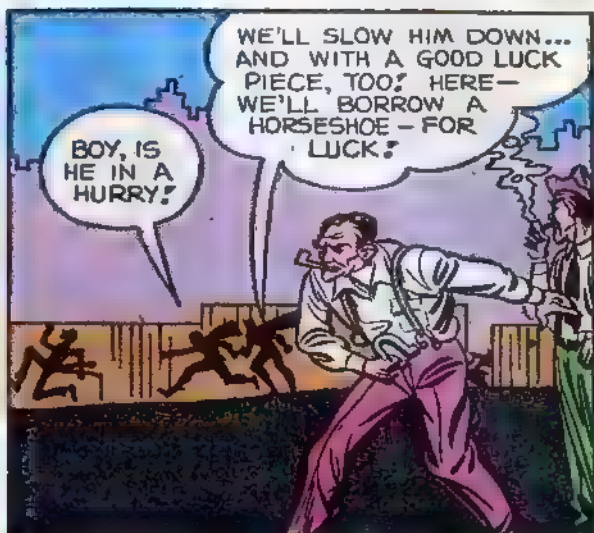
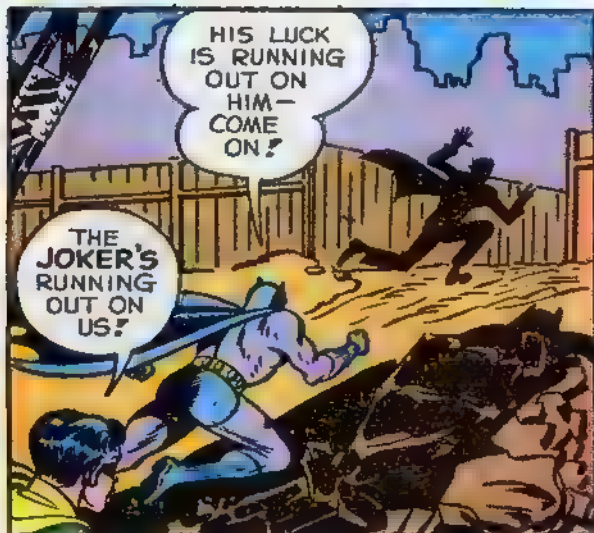


YOU? HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

BY CARRIER PIGEON!

LOSING YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR, JOKER?







HIS
ILLINOIS
"WHIZ KIDS"
WERE ONE OF
THE MOST FAMOUS
TEAMS IN COLLEGE
BASKETBALL
HISTORY

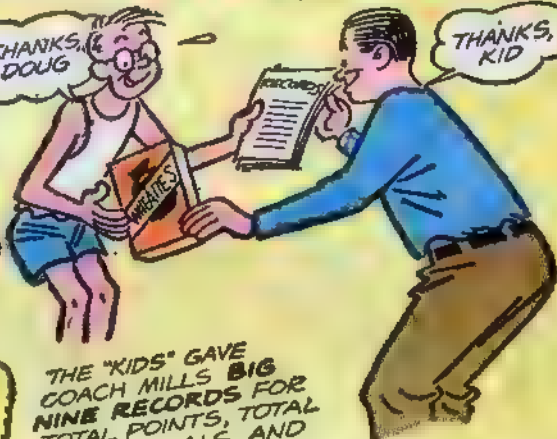


MILLS' "KIDS" (1942-43)
WERE THE FIRST TEAM
TO SWEEP A BIG NINE
SCHEDULE IN 13 YEARS—
FIRST TEAM TO WIN TWO
CONSECUTIVE TITLES IN
29 SEASONS

Doug **MILLS**

THANKS,
DOUG

THANKS,
KID

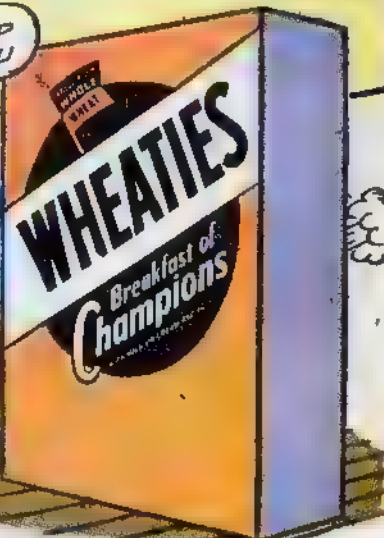


THE "KIDS" GAVE
COACH MILLS BIG
NINE RECORDS FOR
TOTAL POINTS, TOTAL
FIELD GOALS, AND
TOTAL GAMES. ONE
KID SET AN INDIVIDUAL
SCORING RECORD WITH BETTER THAN
21 POINTS PER GAME



"A NOURISHING BREAKFAST IS AN
IMPORTANT PART OF AN ATHLETE'S
TRAINING SCHEDULE," SAYS DOUG MILLS.
"THAT'S WHY I RECOMMEND WHEATIES,
WITH
'BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS,' WITH
MILK AND FRUIT, AS AN IDEAL
TRAINING DISH. I THINK YOU'LL LIKE
THAT SWELL WHEATIES FLAVOR, TOO"

WHEATIES HELP
YOU WHIZ THRU
THE DAY



WHEATIES
**BREAKFAST
OF CHAMPIONS**

WITH MILK AND FRUIT

"Wheaties" and "Breakfast of Champions"
are registered trade marks of
General Mills, Inc.



BATMAN

WITH
ROBIN

- THE BOY WONDER -



DID YOU EVER WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE MIGHTY TEAM OF **BATMAN** AND **ROBIN** SHOULD BE BROKEN UP? WELL, NOW IT CAN BE TOLD... FOR TRAGEDY STRIKES, AND BRUCE WAYNE'S UNTIMELY DEATH IS MOURNED PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY— AND ONLY ALFRED, THE BROKEN-HEARTED BUTLER, REMAINS TO STAND BESIDE THE FORLORN DICK GRAYSON ... BUT THE UNDERWORLD MUST NEVER KNOW THAT BRUCE'S DEATH MEANS THE END OF **BATMAN**, LEST A TIDAL WAVE OF CRIME BE UNLEASHED! AND SO WE HAVE THE SAD, YET STIRRING AND WARMLY, HUMAN STORY OF—

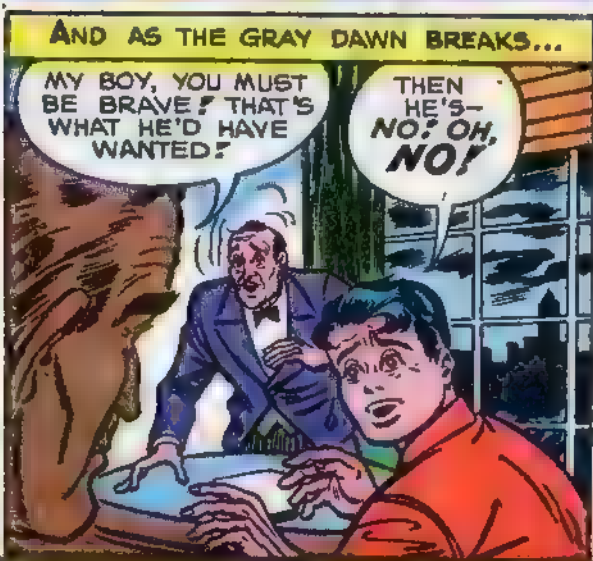
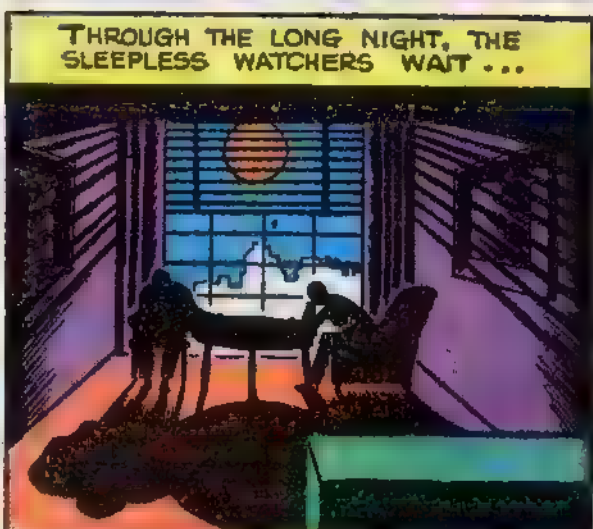
"The CASE of BATMAN II."



ONE MORNING, THE GOTHAM CITY NEWSPAPERS CARRY A TRAGIC HEADLINE...



AND AS THE SHADOW OF TRAGEDY HOVERS OVER GOTHAM HOSPITAL, DICK GRAYSON AND THE FAITHFUL WAYNE BUTLER, ALFRED, KEEP ANXIOUS VIGIL...



"**BRUCE WAYNE IS DEAD!**" SCREAM THE HEADLINES... AND SOME DAYS LATER, IN THE BLEAK MANSION HE ONCE INHABITED...

MR. HENRY BUSH, SIR—THE LATE MR. WAYNE'S LAWYER?

HUH...?

SO SAD? TSK, TSK! AS EXECUTOR OF MR. WAYNE'S VAST ESTATE, WHEN WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE ME READ THE WILL?

WILL?... OH, YES...

AND AS THE BUSTLING LAWYER DEPARTS...

WHAT A GREAT MAN MR. WAYNE WAS, SIR! HIS AFFAIRS ARRANGED AS IF HE KNEW HIS LIFE MIGHT END AT ANY MOMENT!

NOT QUITE, ALFRED!

HE DIDN'T PROVIDE ANOTHER **BATMAN**—AND WE **NEED** ONE! THE UNDERWORLD MUST NEVER KNOW THAT **BATMAN** DIED WHEN BRUCE WENT!

HOW TRUE, MAWSTER DICK! BUT NO ONE CAN EVER TAKE **BATMAN'S** PLACE!

A SECOND **BATMAN**? THE IDEA SEEMS PREPOSTEROUS TO THE BEREFT BOY AND THE BUTLER, WHO WANDER THROUGH THE **BATMAN'S** HALL OF TROPHIES...

I'VE GOT TO CARRY ON ALONE—BUT IT'S A BIG ORDER!

REMEMBER THIS CASE, ALFRED? YOU SAVED **BATMAN'S** LIFE—AND NEARLY LOST YOUR OWN!

IF ONLY I COULD HAVE—(SNIFF)—GIVEN MY LIFE—(SNIFF)—FOR HIM **THIS** TIME!



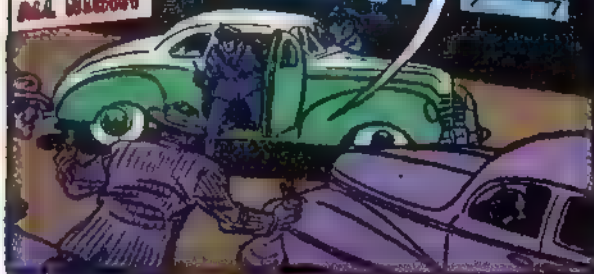
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY...

BEETLE BOLES? I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN THE BIG HOUSE?

FOR YOUR INFORMATION, COPPER, I CRASHED OUT - AN' YOU AIN'T TAKIN' ME BACK?

LOANS
OPEN
ALL NIGHT

Cafe



LET'S GO! THE WHOLE POLICE DEPARTMENT CAN'T STOP US NOW!

AAA-AA-A...



MINUTES LATER, THE AWESOME BAT SYMBOL FLAMES IN THE SKY!

OH, OH - COMMISSIONER GORDON'S CALLING FOR HELP! BUT I DON'T DARE TELL EVEN HIM THAT BATMAN IS DEAD!

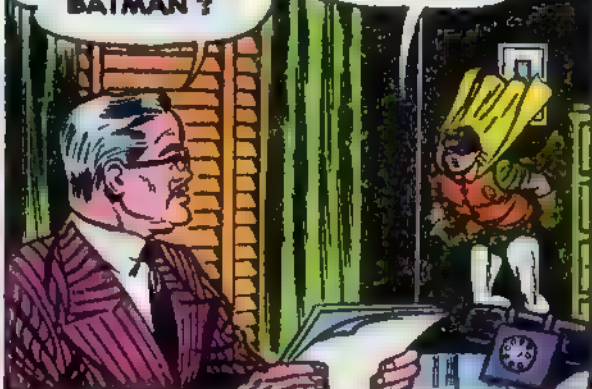
IF ONLY I COULD TAKE HIS PLACE!



SHORTLY...

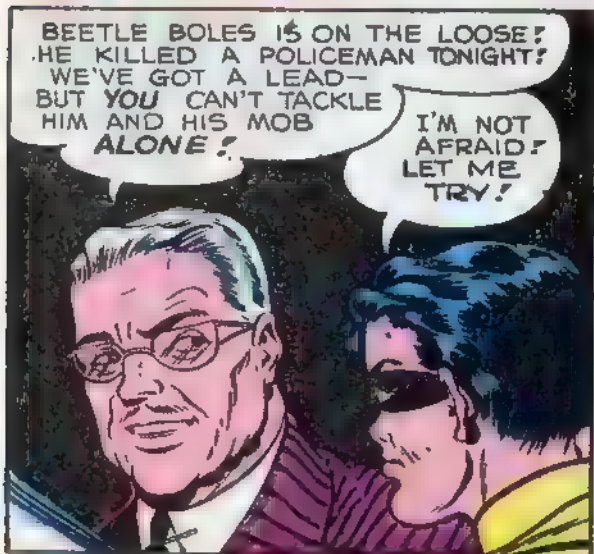
ROBIN! THANKS FOR COMING! BUT - WHERE'S BATMAN?

I'M ON DOUBLE DUTY TONIGHT, COMMISSIONER GORDON! BATMAN'S - ER - BUSY!



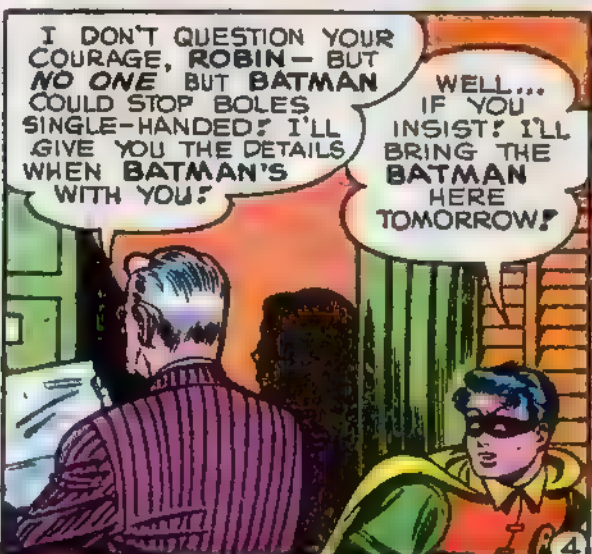
BEETLE BOLES IS ON THE LOOSE! HE KILLED A POLICEMAN TONIGHT! WE'VE GOT A LEAD - BUT YOU CAN'T TACKLE HIM AND HIS MOB ALONE!

I'M NOT AFRAID! LET ME TRY!



I DON'T QUESTION YOUR COURAGE, ROBIN - BUT NO ONE BUT BATMAN COULD STOP BOLES SINGLE-HANDED! I'LL GIVE YOU THE DETAILS WHEN BATMAN'S WITH YOU!

WELL... IF YOU INSIST! I'LL BRING THE BATMAN HERE TOMORROW!





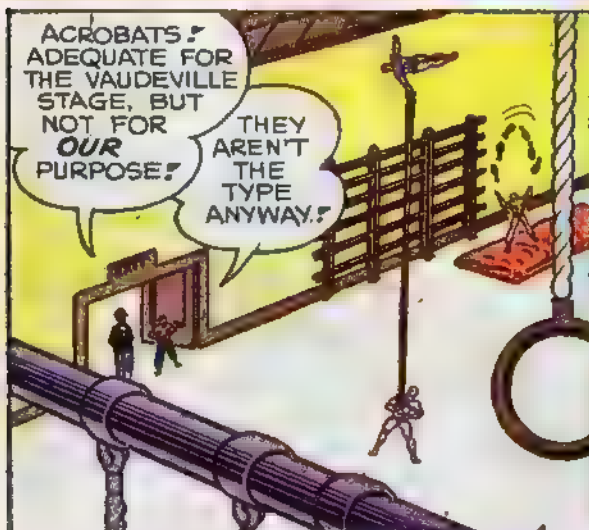
QUITE AN ORDER
ROBIN HAS
 UNDERTAKEN TO
 FILL, WITH **BRUCE**
WAYNE GONE,
 WHERE WILL HE
 FIND ANOTHER
BATMAN? TRUE,
 A MAN OF
 FAULTLESS PHYSIQUE
 AND KEEN MIND
 MIGHT, AFTER YEARS
 OF INTENSIVE
 TRAINING, COME
 CLOSE TO THE
 QUALIFICATIONS...
 BUT **ROBIN** HAS
 ONLY 24 HOURS!

NEXT MORNING...

BUT MAWSTER DICK,
 THIS IS A FUTILE QUEST!
 NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY
 FILL THE REQUIREMENTS!

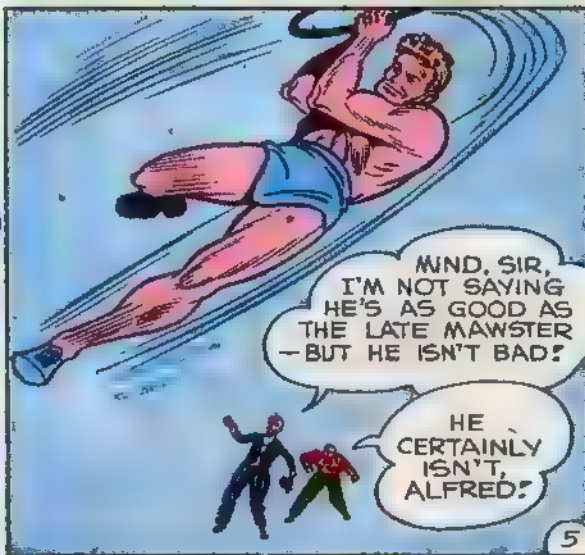
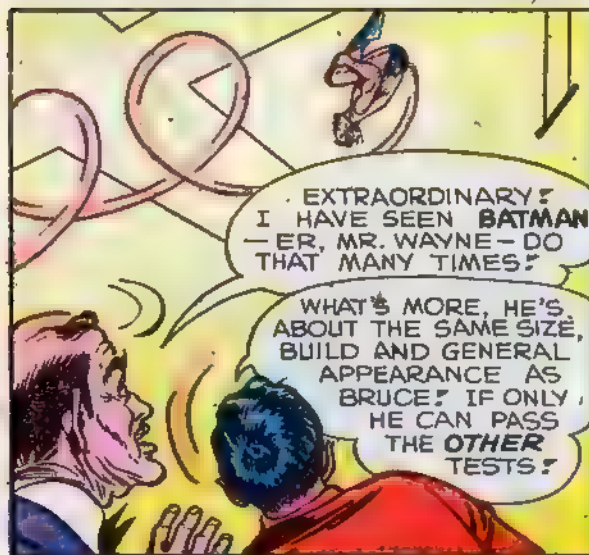
WE'LL SEE! THIS PLACE
 IS PATRONIZED BY
 AMATEUR AND
 PROFESSIONAL
 ATHLETES!
 MAYBE...

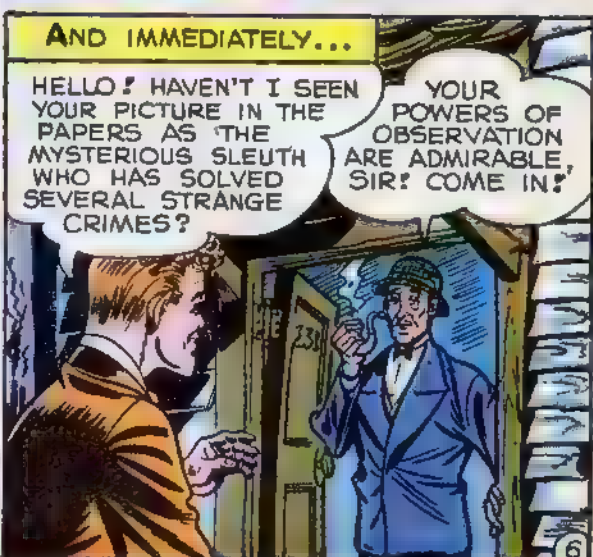
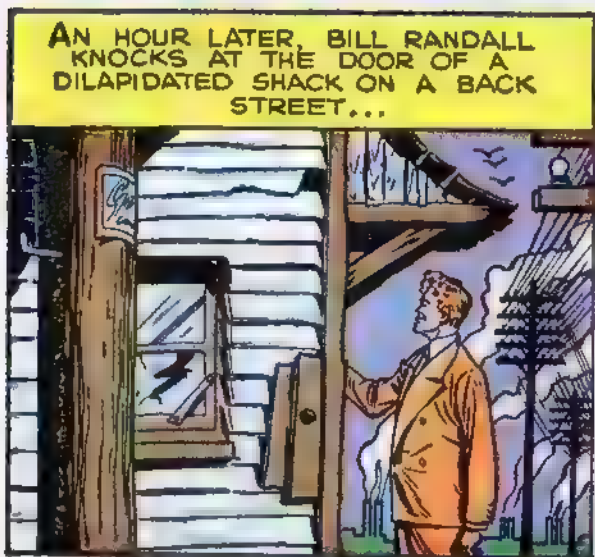
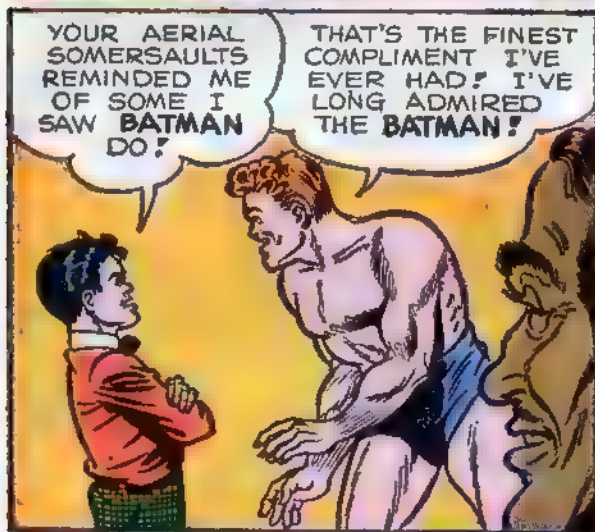
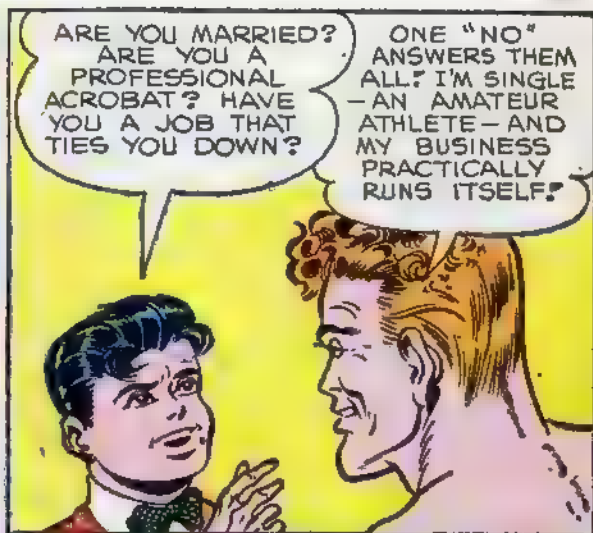
JASPER'S GYM

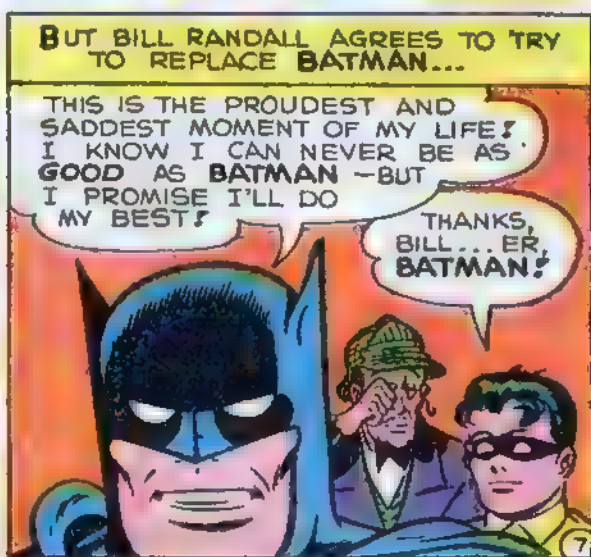
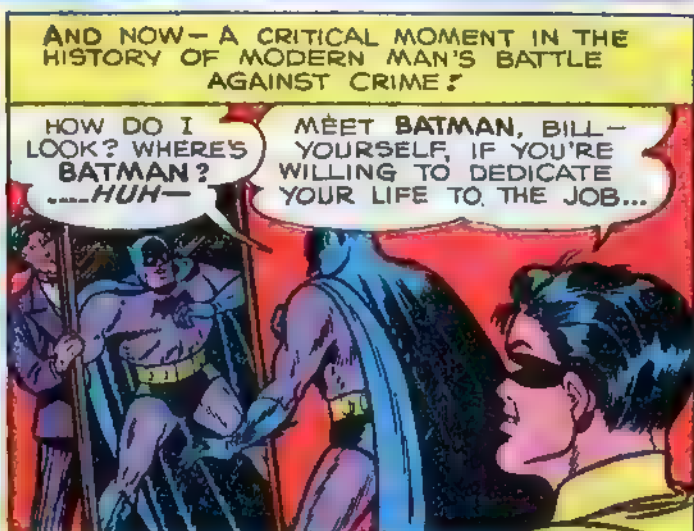
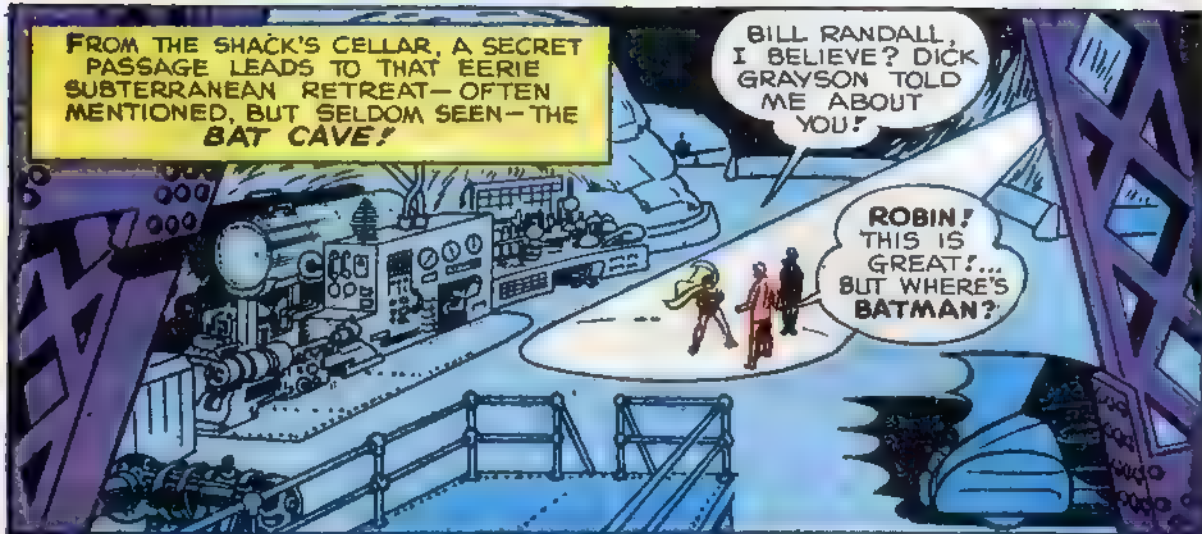


BATMAN
 COULD LIFT
 TWO LIKE
 THAT—
 ONE IN
 EITHER
 HAND!

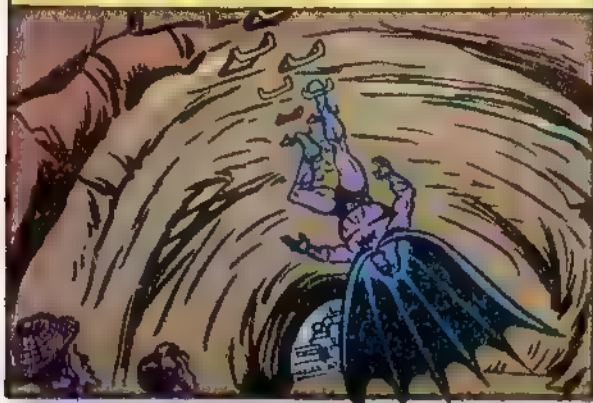
MAYBE THIS
 FELLOW
 CAN, TOO—
 BUT HE'S
 TOO
 MUSCLE-BOUND
 FOR FAST
 ACTION!



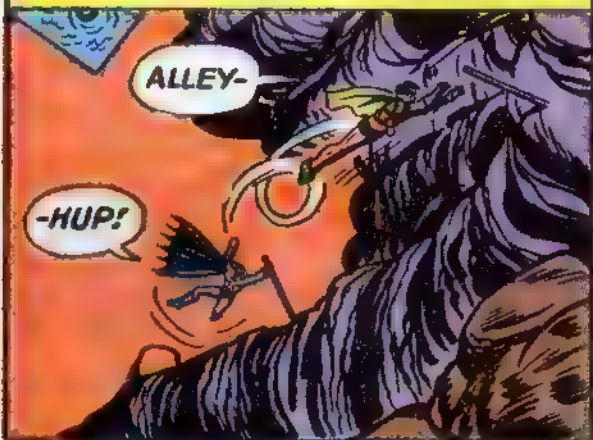




THE SINCERITY OF "BATMAN II" IS EVIDENT—BUT THAT IS NOT ENOUGH! THERE ARE ARDUOUS TESTS SUCH AS THIS BLINDFOLDED EXPERIMENT IN NERVE AND MUSCULAR CONTROL...



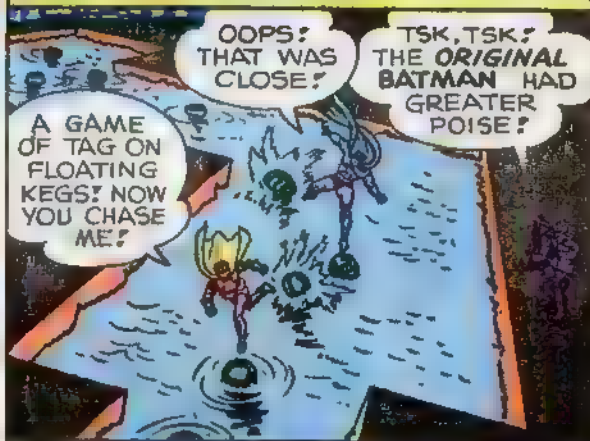
YES, PRECISION TEAMWORK IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE IN THE WORK OF THE DYNAMIC DUO!



ALLEY-

-HUP!

AND THIS ONE, CALLING FOR SURE FOOTING AND A FINE SENSE OF BALANCE?

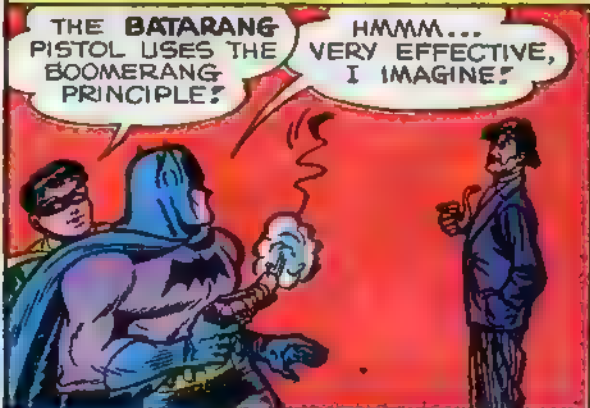


OOPS! THAT WAS CLOSE!

TSK, TSK! THE ORIGINAL BATMAN HAD GREATER POISE!

A GAME OF TAG ON FLOATING KEGS! NOW YOU CHASE ME!

THEN, THERE ARE SPECIAL WEAPONS AND UNIQUE DEVICES WHOSE MYSTERIES MUST BE REVEALED TO BATMAN II...



THE BATARANG PISTOL USES THE BOOMERANG PRINCIPLE?

HMMM... VERY EFFECTIVE, I IMAGINE!

MY WORD! HOW CLUMSY OF HIM!

YES, INDEED—VERY EFFECTIVE!



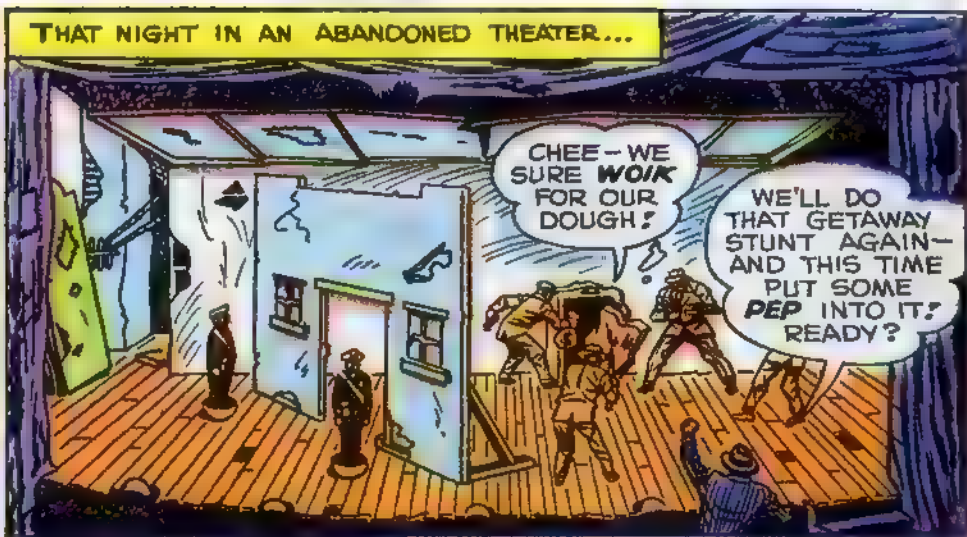
TAKE OFF YOUR UTILITY BELT, AND I'LL EXPLAIN ITS CONTENTS—AND THE BELT-BUCKLE RADIO! THEN WE'LL TRY OUT THE BATMOBILE AND THE BATPLANE!

FINE!

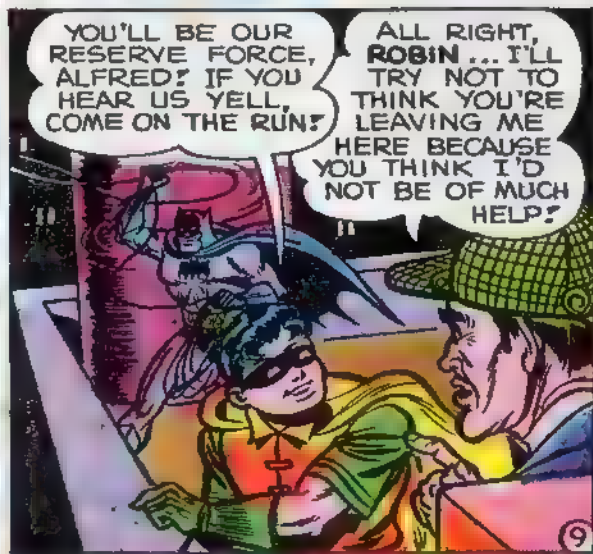
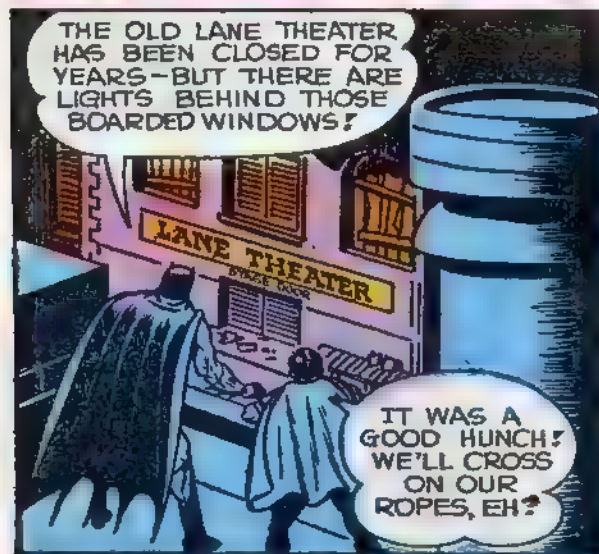
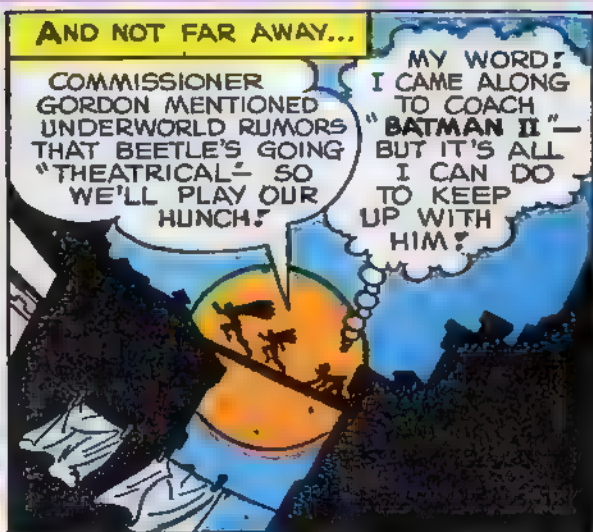


AND THE
VALUE OF
REHEARSAL
FOR
IMPORTANT
ACTION IS
APPRECIATED
ALSO BY
BEETLE
BOLES,
MASTER OF
SAVAGE
UNDERWORLD
STRATEGY!

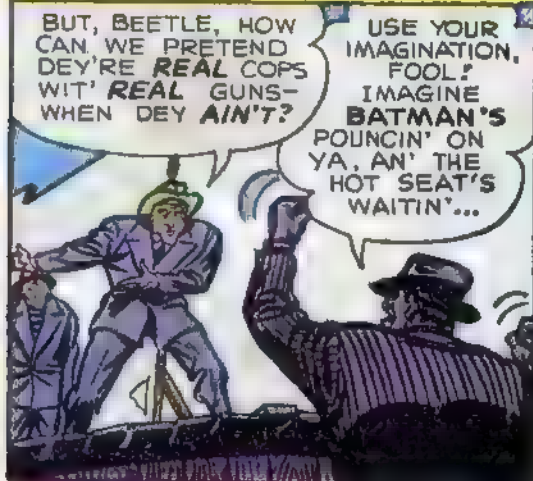
THAT NIGHT IN AN ABANDONED THEATER...



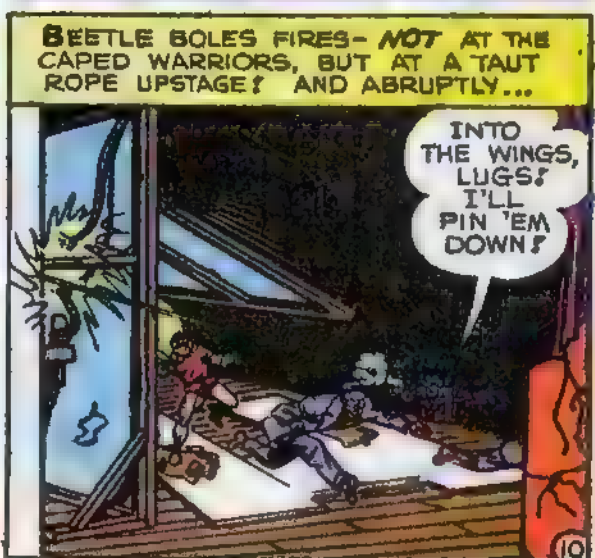
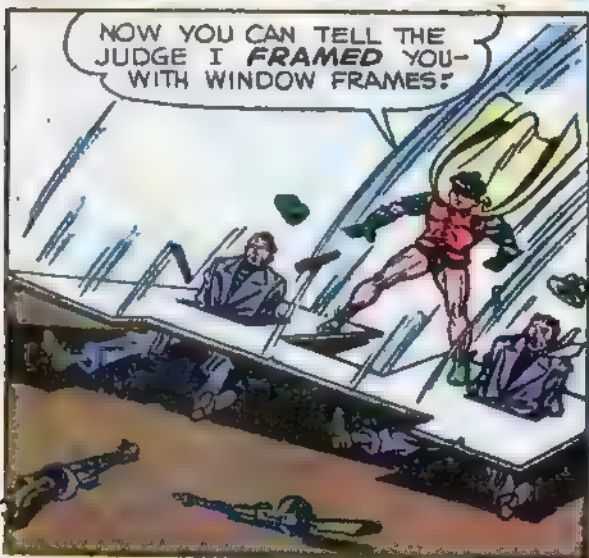
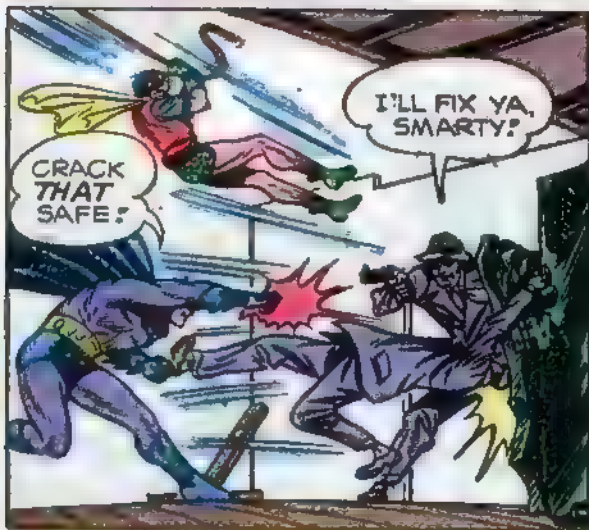
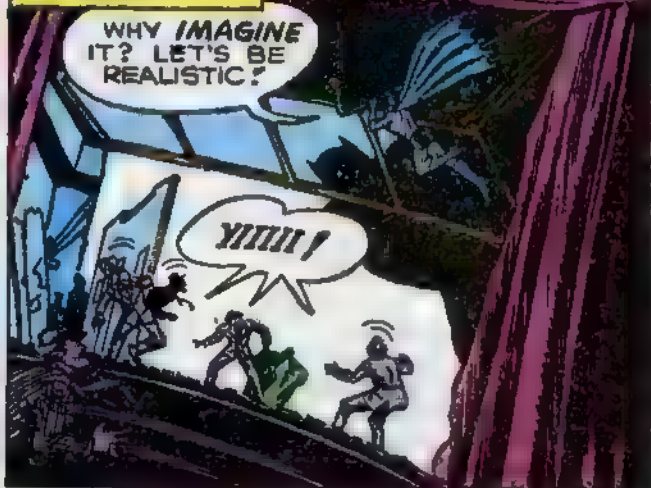
AND NOT FAR AWAY...



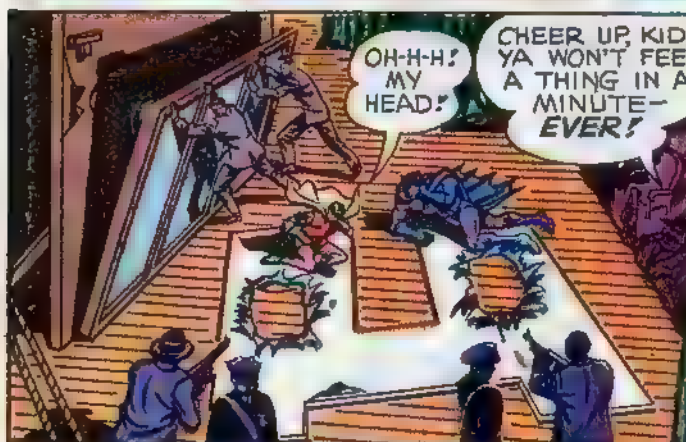
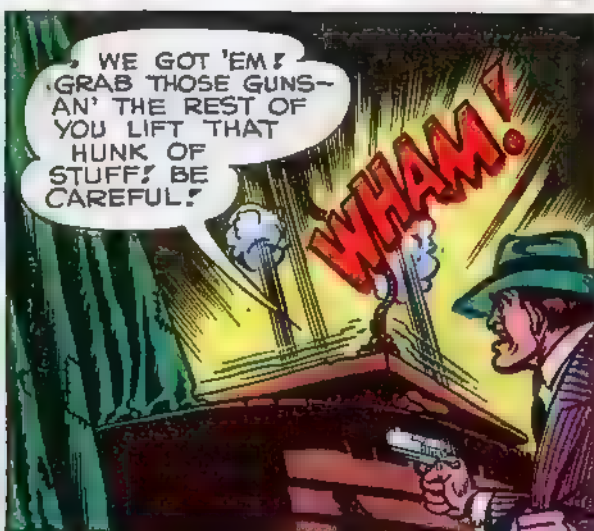
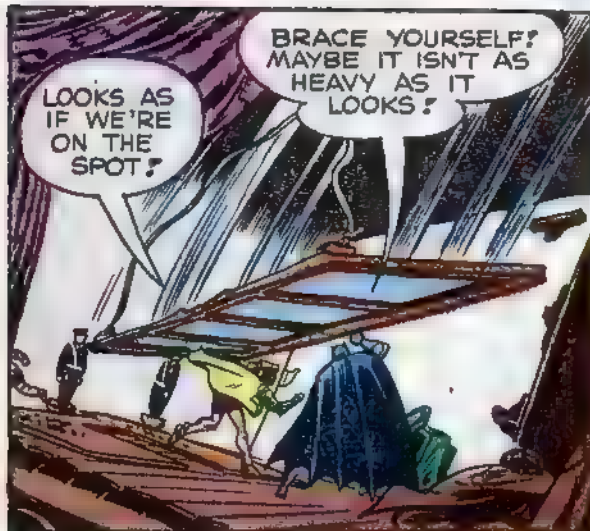
INSIDE THE PLAYHOUSE...



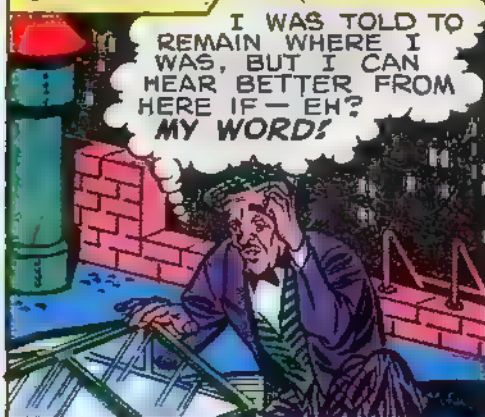
SUDDENLY....



INTO THE WINGS, LUGS! I'LL PIN 'EM DOWN!



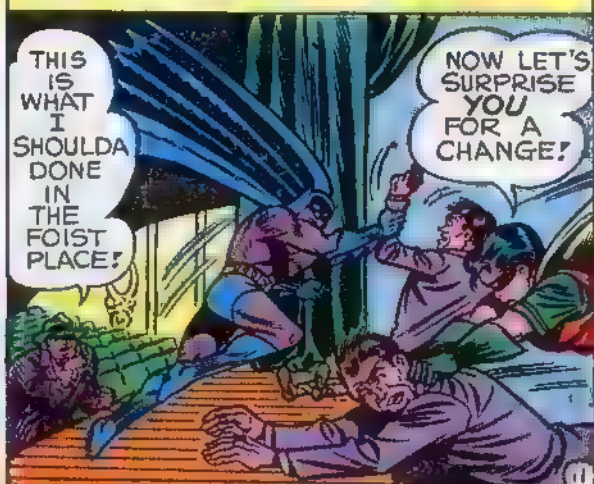
MEANWHILE, THE DYNAMIC DUO'S "RESERVE FORCE" HAS BECOME RESTLESS, AND IS NOW DIRECTLY OVERHEAD!

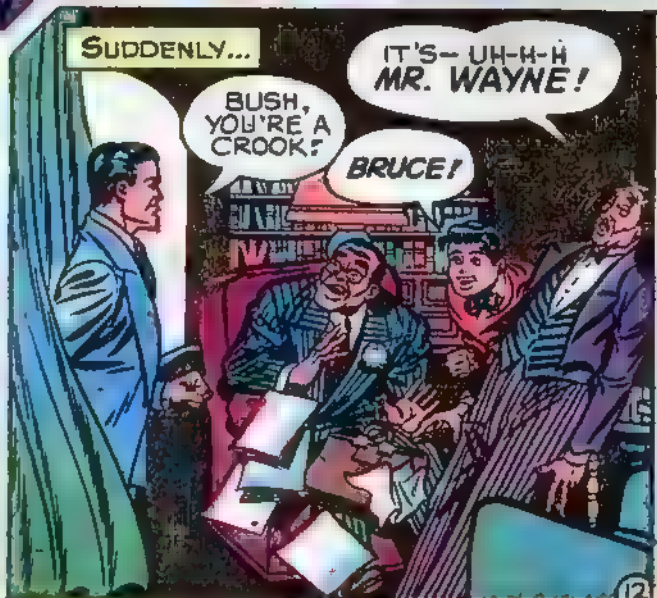
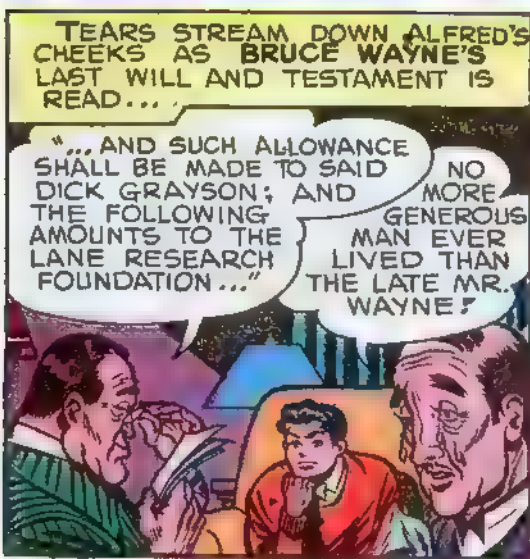
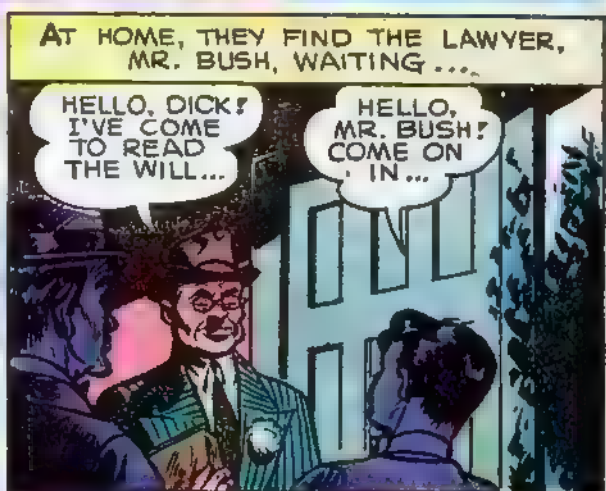
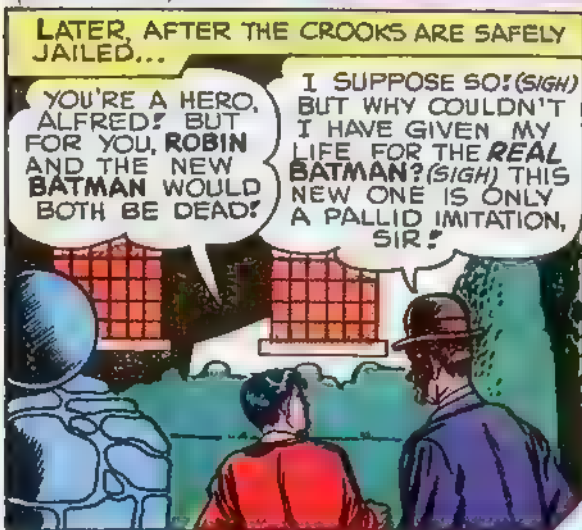
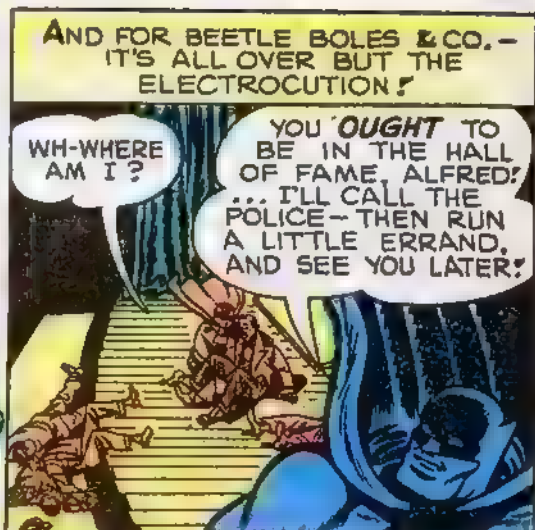
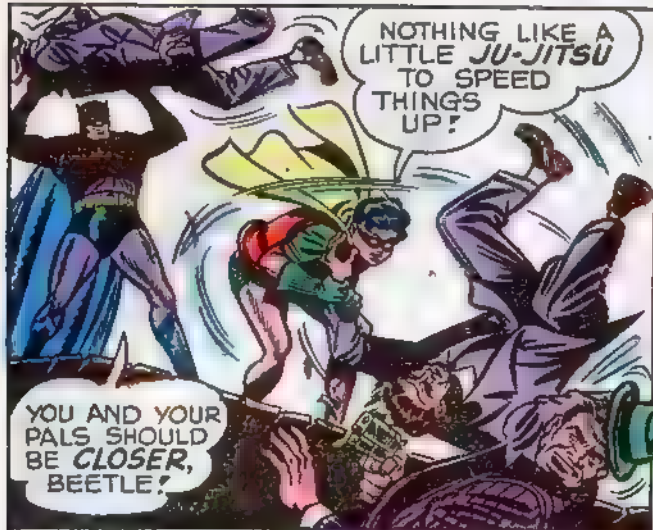


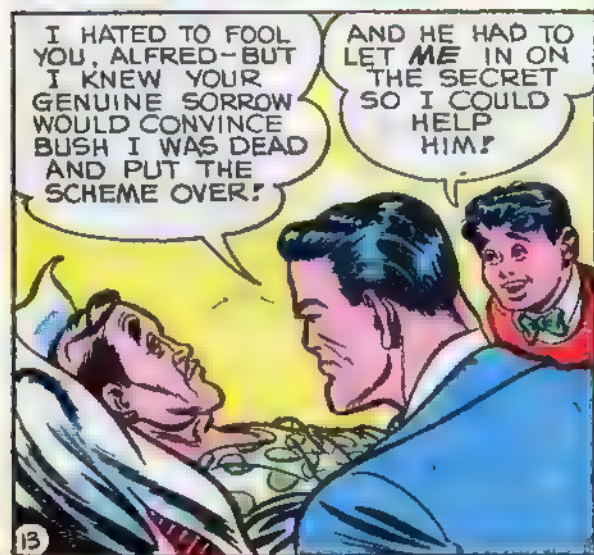
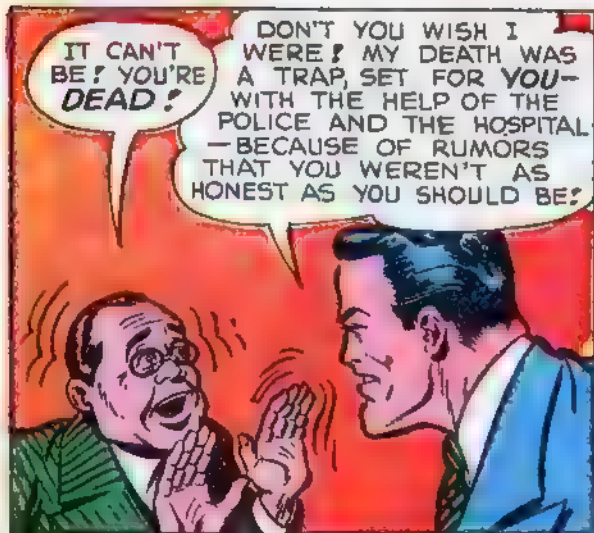
ALFRED'S NEXT MOVE SEEMS TO MEAN CERTAIN DEATH—YET HE DOES NOT HESITATE!



AND IN A FLASH, THE TABLES ARE TURNED!







HURRY, HURRY! LAST CHANCE TO OWN A VALUABLE COMPASS RING!

HEY, KIDS! DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS HANDSOME, SCIENTIFIC RING!



AND DON'T MISS A MORNING OF MY FAVORITE CEREAL, NABISCO SHREDDED WHEAT!



● Specially designed for National Biscuit Company!

● Styled by a leading American ring designer!

● Streamlined, sturdy construction!

● Self-adjusting band, fits any finger!

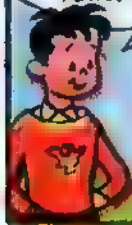
● Gleaming, gold-color victory bronze!

● Accurate magnetized needle always swings North!

Copyright 1942 Nabisco-National Biscuit Company

HIS NIBS

I'LL BET YOU A BOWL OF NABISCO SHREDDED WHEAT YOU CAN'T POINT NORTH!



I... I THINK IT'S THAT WAY.



WRONG! MY COMPASS RING PROVES IT'S THAT WAY!



GEE! HOW CAN I GET A RING LIKE THAT?



NABISCO SHREDDED WHEAT WILL SEND YOU ONE IF YOU HURRY!



JUST WAIT! I'LL FINISH THIS SWELL DISH!



LAST CALL for this compass ring!

Not a toy, but a *jewel* of a scientific instrument set in a magnificent finger ring! Just as no woodsman would ever be without a compass... so no bright boy or girl will be without this compass ring! Why, it might even help make you a *hero*!

Here's all you do to get your compass ring: mail 15¢ with one box top from that famous favorite,

Nabisco Shredded Wheat. It's tempting—it's *tasty*... it's the hearty whole wheat cereal with the picture of Niagara Falls on the box. Always good and good all ways... the flavors baked in for keeps!

Ask Mother to buy you a box of Nabisco Shredded Wheat. Then mail the box top with 15¢ for your compass ring. But hurry—there aren't too many left!

Nabisco Shredded Wheat,
Dept. 2-C
P. O. Box 15, Station O,
New York 11, N. Y.

Please rush me my COMPASS RING. I'm enclosing 1 Nabisco Shredded Wheat box top and 15¢.

(Please print name and address)

Name.....

Address.....

City.....Zone.....State.....

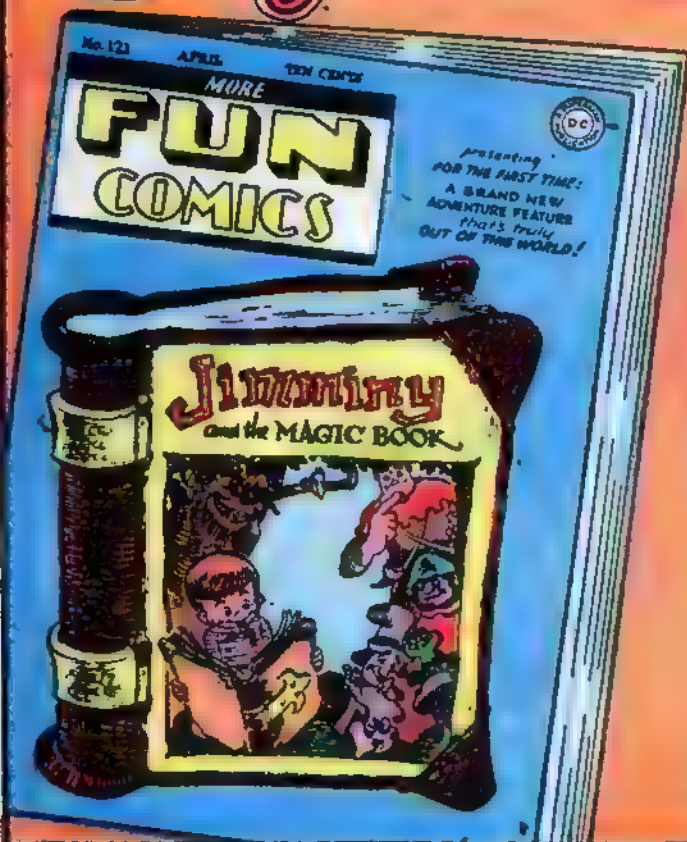
BAKED BY NABISCO • NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY



The Publishers of
**SUPERMAN, BATMAN,
BOY COMMANDOS—**
AND A HOST OF OTHER FAVORITES

Now give you:

JIMMINY and the **MAGIC BOOK**

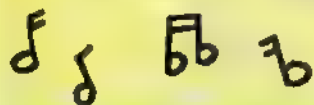


HERE'S A
BRAND-NEW
ACTION-FEATURE
THAT'S EXCITINGLY
Different!

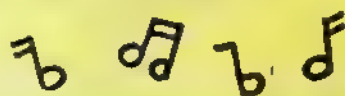
— AND BEST OF ALL,
THERE ARE **TWO**
BIG JIMMINY STORIES
IN EVERY ISSUE OF
MORE FUN COMICS —
PLUS OTHER FEATURES!

BE SURE TO GET
Your COPY!

MELODY OF MURDER



by Tom Neill



DETECTIVE LIEUTENANT BLANEY said: "You can't think of any reason why someone should want to kill your husband, Mrs. Meggs?"

The blonde woman shook her head. "No, Lieutenant, I can't." She looked at him anxiously. "As for his breaking up the partnership with Arthur Constant, well, those things happen in the songwriting business. I can't imagine Arthur harboring a grudge."

Blaney nodded. "I guess you're right, Mrs. Meggs. He's done all right as a lyric writer himself. But he seemed to sell more songs with your husband's melodies."

Lieutenant Blaney had come to the penthouse an hour earlier. Martin Meggs, one of the world's foremost tunesmiths had been found dead in his penthouse apartment. Mrs. Meggs had been on Long Island, visiting friends. The butler, finding the body, had summoned her immediately, after notifying police.

Blaney said: "The only thing that puzzles me is why Mr. Meggs had this secret entrance built to the penthouse."

His widow smiled. "When you're as popular as Arthur, you've got to sort of sneak in and out. There were always people trying to get to him. He hated to give testimonials for things, and he wouldn't play benefits." She played with her hands, expressively, said: "You've probably read how eccentric he was."

"Yes. I understand his working habits were the same."

"That's right." Mrs. Meggs moved over to a beautiful console radio-phonograph. "This was his piano."

"His what?"

"His way of expressing himself." Alongside the console was a small piano. Mrs. Meggs lifted the lid on the console, brought

out a small microphone. "Very few people know this," she said, "but Martin used to compose his tunes by singing into this mike. Or playing a number. See."

The woman flipped a switch. Blaney nodded approval as, from the record, there came a catchy tune.

For a moment, Mrs. Meggs trembled as her late husband's voice came through the loudspeaker. Then she switched off the apparatus. "He liked to play them back. That way he could detect any flaws in his melody. He was working on this song when I left. Nobody has heard it yet."

"I see." Blaney picked up his hat. "Well, Mrs. Meggs, we'll do what we can to pick up your husband's killer." His voice sounded confident. But Blaney was anything but that.

Outside, he climbed into his car. This case was really a puzzler. Whoever the murderer was, he had covered his tracks carefully. Without any great trouble, he had gotten into the penthouse unobserved, used the secret entrance, effected the murder, and gone out again, unrecognized except by his victim.

But who? Blaney shrugged. Mrs. Meggs had covered up that avenue pretty effectively. "Not only Arthur Constant, but Charlie Dawes, Dick La Cava, Bunny Bonura, and a number of other songwriters had had, at some time, access to that secret entrance."

It would take a good while to question them all. And the longer it took, the tougher it would be to pick up any trail the killer might have left. Blaney wasn't kidding himself that this was one of the toughest cases he had ever tackled.

He told that to the commissioner as he returned to police headquarters some four hours later. The commissioner shook his

head. "We've got to make an arrest fast, Blaney," he said. "This Meggs was a pretty big guy. And you know how the Mayor thrives on what the Broadway columns say."

"Yeah. I know," Blaney assented gloomily. "One line in any of those boys' columns and he takes it seriously. You'd think the editorial pages of every paper in the country were after him."

"Not only that, Blaney, Meggs was a personal friend of the Mayor's." The commissioner looked worried. "What do you propose to do? And for heavens sake, Eddie, stop that whistling."

Blaney grinned. "Sorry, I heard the tune in Meggs' apartment. One he was working on for some picture deal he had just signed. The lyric was good too. I suppose a songwriter gets paid more for words and music, than just music."

"I wouldn't know," said the commissioner. "Just stop the whistling. I've got a headache."

"Okay," said Blaney, cheerily. "I think I'll run up and talk to Constant now. He might give me a lead. He was out when I was there this afternoon."

Arthur Constant opened the door himself. He was wearing a vividly-colored dressing gown. He greeted Blaney cordially, said: "I've been waiting for you, Lieutenant. My man, who has the evening off, left a message that you called." He led the way into a sumptuous living room. Logs crackled in the fireplace. Constant's desk was littered with papers.

"I've been working on a new number," he said, smiling. "You know a lyricist's life isn't his own. Always work and more work. Have a drink, Lieutenant?"

"No, thanks," Blaney smiled. "I thought you might be able to give me a hand. We know Meggs was murdered. But why?"

"I don't know," Constant said slowly. "His death will be a great loss to the music world. The man was a genius. I enjoyed the two years I worked with him." He spread his hands, expressively. "Of course you know we split up. Martin decided he could write his own lyrics."

"I know." Blaney's eyes bored into Constant's. "You haven't seen him since the splitup?"

Constant shook his head. "Not for two weeks. I've been commissioned to write the lyrics for the new Scanties Revue. I've been too busy to see anyone." He pursed his lips. "I'm not saying I won't miss Martin. He was great, could pick rhythms out of the air."

Constant brought out a large volume from the middle drawer of his desk. "I kept this scrapbook of press clippings on Martin and me," he said. "Like to look at it while I finish a line I was writing when you came in?"

"Sure." Blaney took the book. It was filled with pictures and writeups of the pair. Engrossed, he turned the pages, humming to himself.

At his desk, Constant labored over a sheet of paper.

Blaney, humming, suddenly realized he might be disturbing the songwriter. He stopped humming. Then, he stiffened. Constant, while working on his lyrics, was humming absently.

Blaney got to his feet. The writer looked up. "What's the trouble, Lieutenant? Bored?" He smiled affably. "I'll be through in a minute."

Blaney stared at him. "You're through now, Constant," he said. "Come along with me."

"What?" The songwriter looked at him, his expression incredulous. "What are you talking about?"

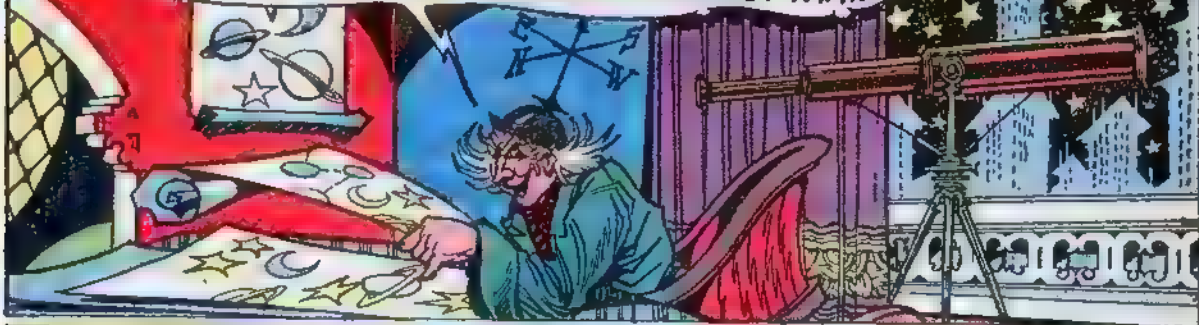
"The tune you were humming," Blaney said evenly. "When I stopped singing it, you picked it up and hummed the rest of the melody." His voice was cold. "That melody happens to be the song Martin Meggs composed this morning. And the only one who could have heard it besides Mrs. Meggs and me, was the killer—Meggs was writing it when the killer arrived!" He shrugged. "And it probably added fuel to your murderous rage, Constant, to discover Meggs had written another hit. Alone, this time!"



PROF. DIPP

WHOLESALE DEALER IN STAR DUST, AND
AN ASTROLOGICAL ORACLE OF THE FUTURE
OF WHOM THERE ARE NONE ORACLER—!

THIS IS A MONTH DURING WHICH THE PLANETARY
ASPECTS WILL BE MOST FAVORABLE TO THOSE BORN
UNDER THE SIGNS OF JUPITER, VIRGO, ARIES AND
CAPRICORN.— ALSO THOSE WITH A BULGING TRUST FUND,
A YACHT AND A 500 ACRE ESTATE, WITH NO MORTGAGES!
GREAT PROMISE OF IMPROVEMENT IS IN STORE FOR MAN-
KIND GENERALLY AND— *I ALSO PREDICT THAT...*



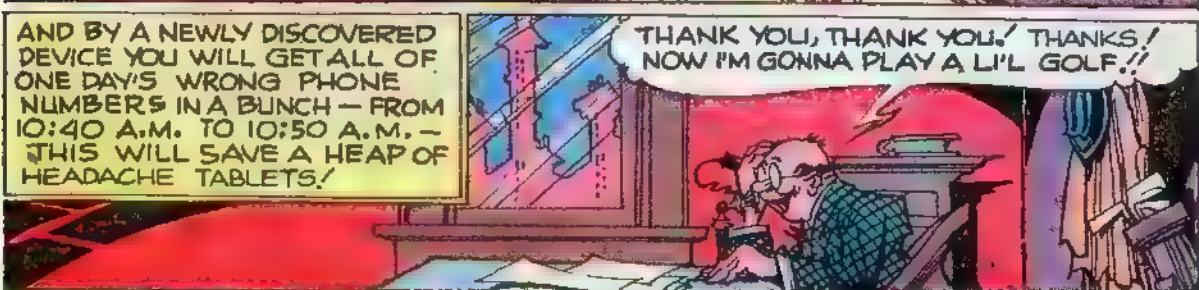
... BY A SECRET CHEMICAL
PROCESS, CERTAIN GRAIN
STALKS OF STRAW, WHEN
CROSSED WITH LEATHER
SWEATBANDS (SIZED TO
SLIT), WILL SOON PRODUCE
A VERY HUSKY CROP OF
STRAW HATS ANNUALLY!

YEAH... NEXT YEAR I'M
GONNA RAISE ME SOME
PANAMAS.



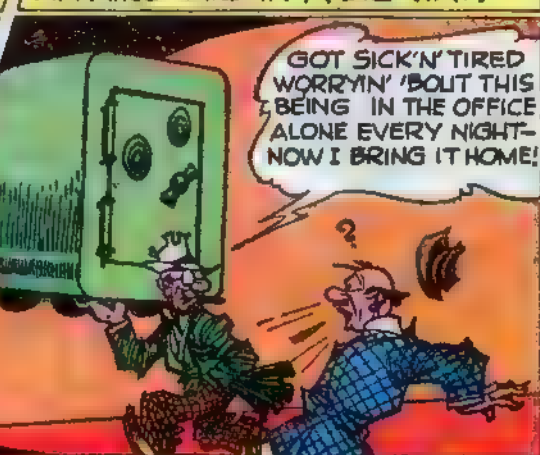
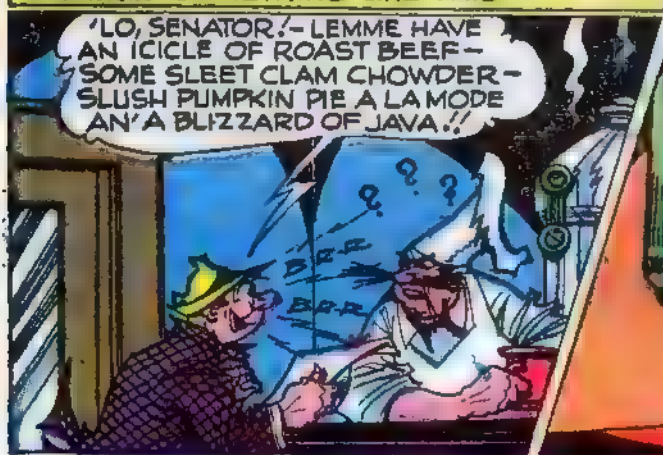
AND BY A NEWLY DISCOVERED
DEVICE YOU WILL GET ALL OF
ONE DAY'S WRONG PHONE
NUMBERS IN A BUNCH— FROM
10:40 A.M. TO 10:50 A.M.—
THIS WILL SAVE A HEAP OF
HEADACHE TABLETS!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU! THANKS!
NOW I'M GONNA PLAY A LI'L GOLF!!



QUICK-FREEZING PROCESSED FOOD WILL FILL THE RESTAURANT MENUS A FEW SHORT MONTHS FROM NOW! AND AN ORDINARY MEAL WILL BE ORDERED SOMETHING LIKE THIS —

MAGNESIUM, THE LIGHTEST METAL IN THE WORLD, WILL SOON FILL ITS OWN IMPORTANT PLACE IN WORLD AFFAIRS—AND IN A BIG WAY!

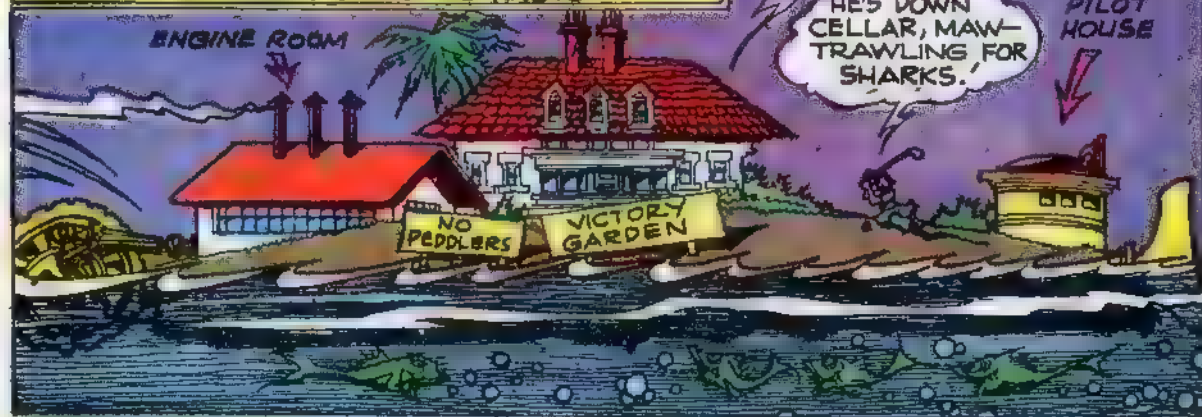


FLOATING COUNTRY ESTATES WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE TO THE TOURIST-MINDED STAY-AT-HOMES—LABRADOR IN THE SUMMER—THE CARIBBEAN IN THE WINTER (SEASICKNESS BOTH WAYS EN ROUTE) SIZED 5 TO 20 ACRES, SPEED 20 KNOTS —

JUNIOR!—WHERE'S YOUR PAP?

HE'S DOWN CELLAR, MAW—TRAWLING FOR SHARKS.

PILOT HOUSE

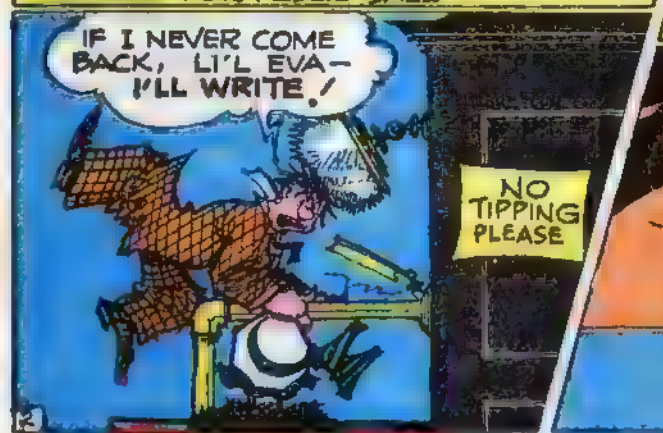


A NEW VENDING MACHINE THAT PROMISES TO GIVE YOU A HAIRCUT, SHAMPOO, SHAVE, SINGE, SHINE WITH COFFEE AND DOUGHNUTS—ALL IN 3 MINUTES, TO THE TUNE OF LOHENGRIN, WILL SOON BE OFFERED FOR PUBLIC SALE —

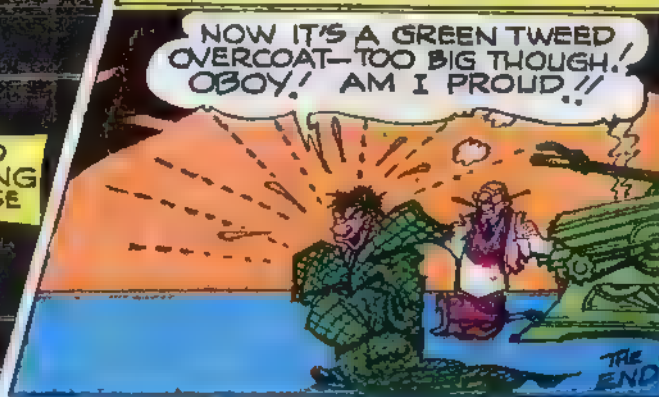
AND SCIENCE WILL FINALLY PERFECT A METHOD FOR TAKING THE SHINE OUT OF A BLUE SERGE SUIT, WHILE ALSO CHANGING THE COLOR, SIZE, AND STYLE OF THE GARMENT, ALL IN ONE 3 MINUTE OPERATION.

IF I NEVER COME BACK, LI'L EVA—I'LL WRITE!

NO TIPPING PLEASE



NOW IT'S A GREEN TWEED OVERCOAT—TOO BIG THOUGH! OBOY! AM I PROUD!!



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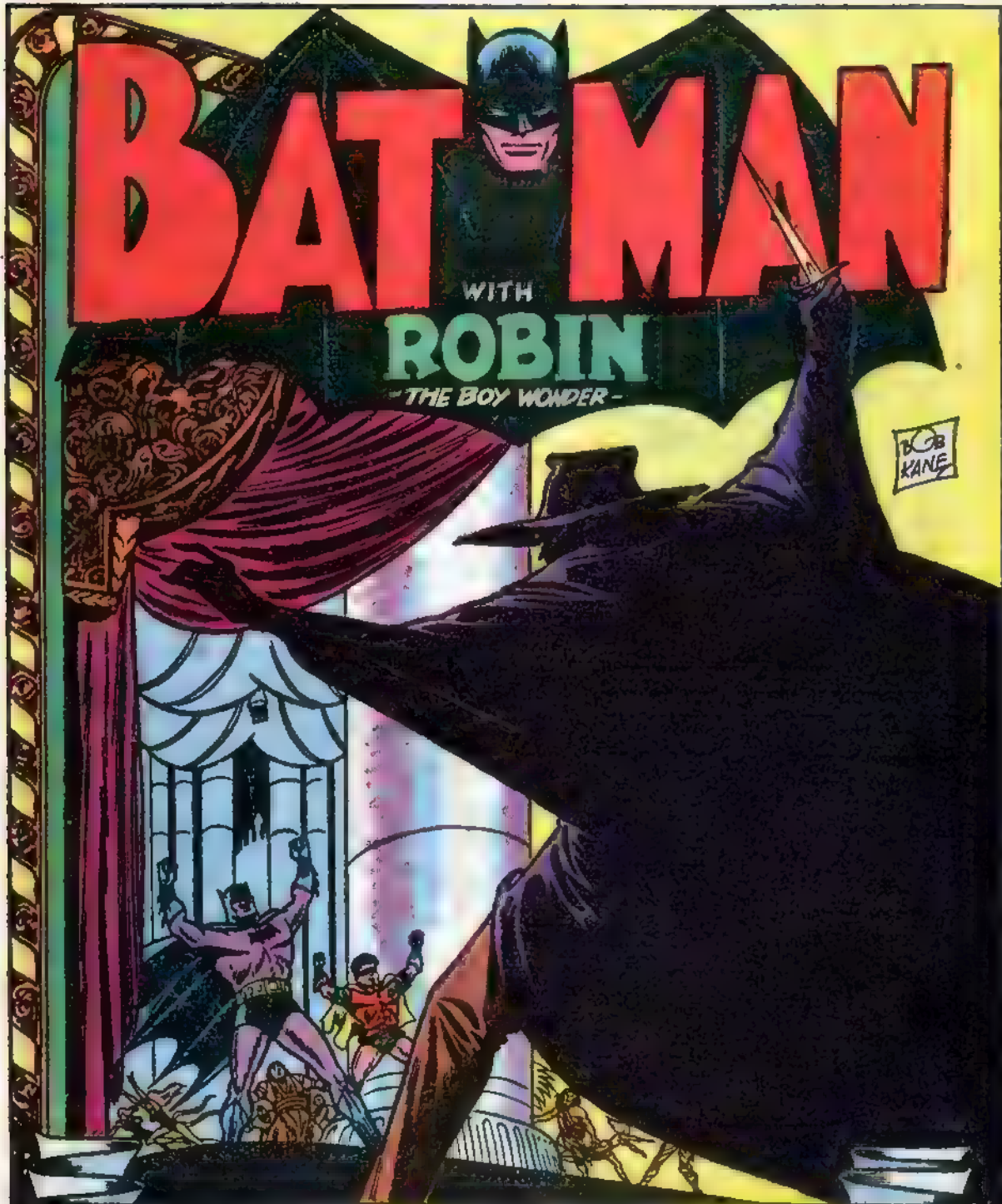
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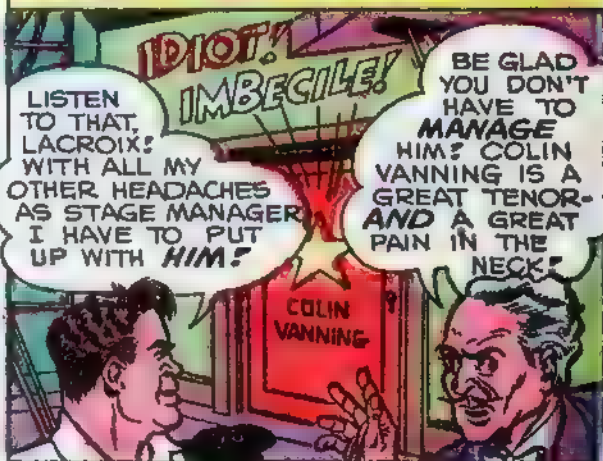
TRAGEDY IN THE GRAND TRADITION BROODS OVER THE GOTHAM CITY OPERA, WHERE LOVELY HEROINES SIGH FOR GOLDEN-THROATED HEROES AND DYING IS MERELY THE FINAL NOTE OF PATHOS IN MELODIOUS MAKE-BELIEVE! BUT WHEN A PHANTOM KILLER STILLS FOREVER THE GOLDEN VOICES OF FAMOUS SINGERS—THEN BATMAN AND ROBIN ENTER THE SCENE TO SOLVE THE SHOCKING CASE OF—**"THE GRAND OPERA MURDERS!"**

OPENING NIGHT OF GOTHAM CITY'S GRAND OPERA SEASON BRINGS OUT SOCIETY FOLK—ALSO MANY SINCERE OPERA-LOVERS...



I Pagli
COLIN VANNING
—♦—
VIOLA ESTES
—♦—
GRAHAM LENOX

IT BRINGS, TOO, A GREAT SHOW OF ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT BACKSTAGE!



LISTEN TO THAT, LACROIX! WITH ALL MY OTHER HEADACHES AS STAGE MANAGER I HAVE TO PUT UP WITH HIM!

BE GLAD YOU DON'T HAVE TO **MANAGE** HIM? COLIN VANNING IS A GREAT TENOR—AND A GREAT PAIN IN THE NECK!

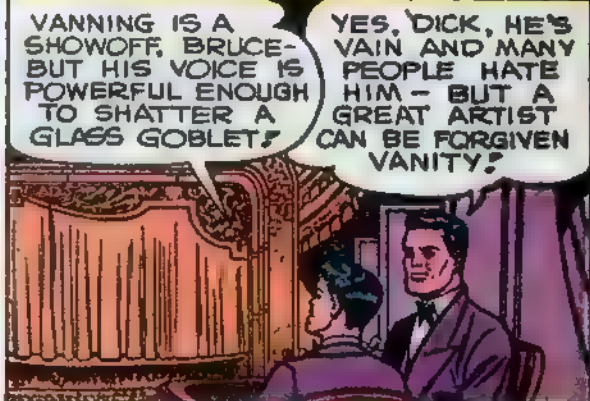
BEHIND THE DOOR, VANNING DRESSES FOR THE ROLE OF CANIO IN *I PAGLIACCI*...



BE CAREFUL WITH THAT COLLAR, FOOL!

Y-YES, SIR, MR. VANNING, SIR!

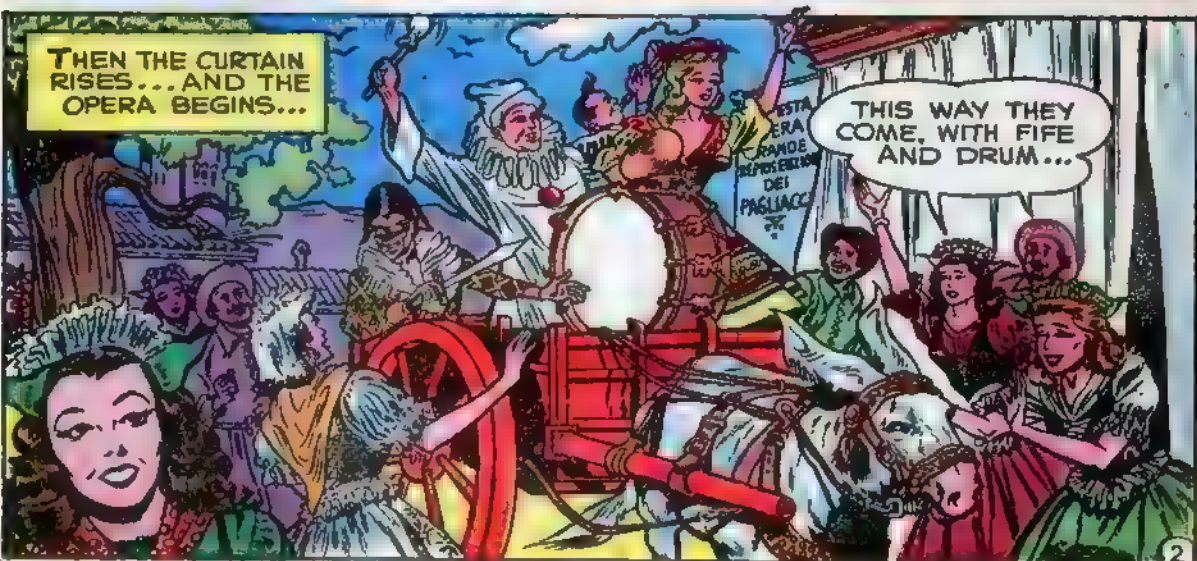
MEANWHILE, **BRUCE WAYNE** AND HIS YOUNG WARD, **DICK GRAYSON**, ENTER THEIR OPERA BOX...



VANNING IS A SHOWOFF, BRUCE—BUT HIS VOICE IS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SHATTER A GLASS GOBLET!

YES, DICK, HE'S VAIN AND MANY PEOPLE HATE HIM—BUT A GREAT ARTIST CAN BE FORGIVEN VANITY!

THEN THE CURTAIN RISES... AND THE OPERA BEGINS...



THIS WAY THEY COME, WITH FIFE AND DRUM...

PRESENTLY, THE LAST ACT, DURING WHICH THE OPERA NEARS ITS TRAGIC CLIMAX...



IT IS CANIO!
HE WILL KILL
YOU! YOU MUST
FLEE!

I GO!

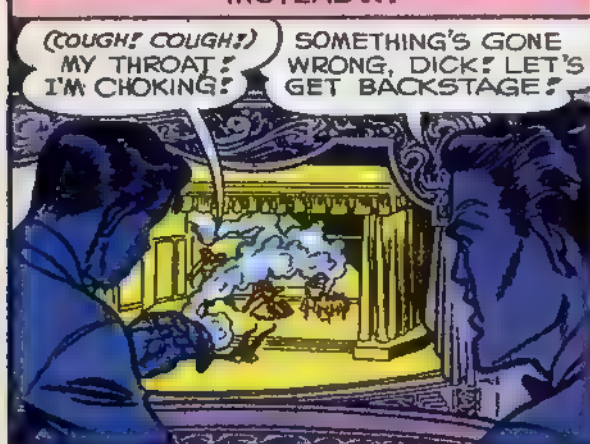
A FAKE BLADE FLASHES----AND CANIO PRETENDS TO SLAY COLUMBINE AND SILVIO--A VILLAGER WHO RACES TO PROTECT HER--ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPT...



NO PUNCHINELLO AM I--
BUT A MAN!

MURDER!

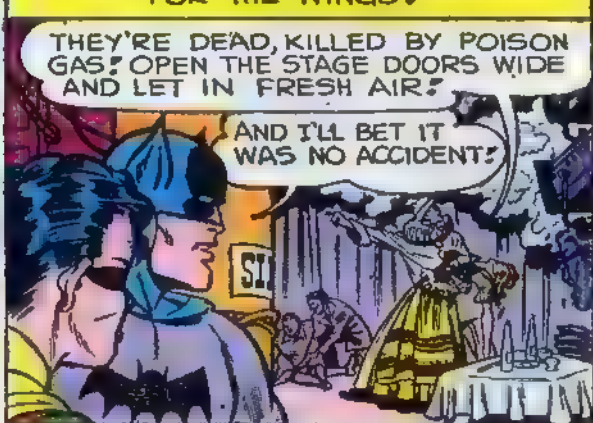
NOW FOR THE TRAGIC CLOWN'S CLOSING LINE -- "THE COMEDY IS ENDED!" BUT, INSTEAD...



(COUGH! COUGH!)
MY THROAT!
I'M CHOKING!

SOMETHING'S GONE
WRONG, DICK! LET'S
GET BACKSTAGE!

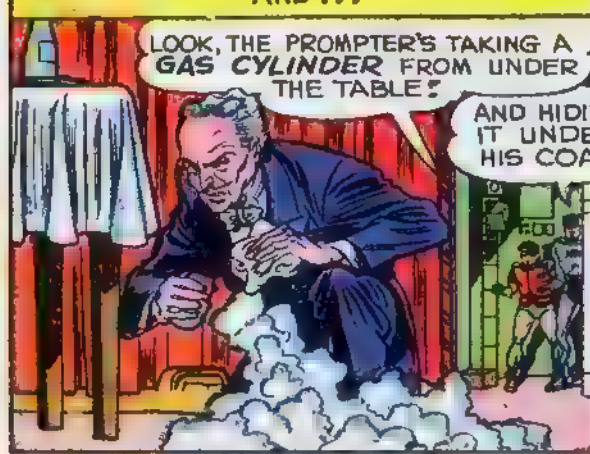
IN THE CORRIDOR BEHIND THEIR BOX, BRUCE AND DICK REMOVE OUTER CLOTHES --AND BATMAN AND ROBIN RACE FOR THE WINGS!



THEY'RE DEAD, KILLED BY POISON
GAS! OPEN THE STAGE DOORS WIDE
AND LET IN FRESH AIR!

AND I'LL BET IT
WAS NO ACCIDENT!

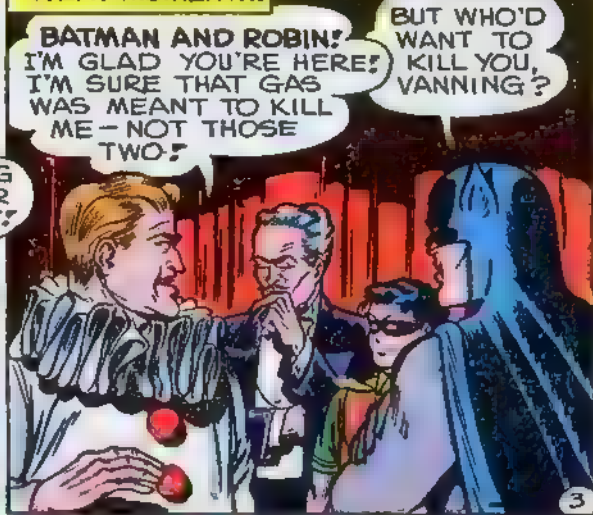
AS THE CAST GATHERS AROUND THE VICTIMS, MANAGER-DIRECTOR LACROIX EMERGES FROM THE PROMPTER'S BOX, AND...



LOOK, THE PROMPTER'S TAKING A
GAS CYLINDER FROM UNDER
THE TABLE!

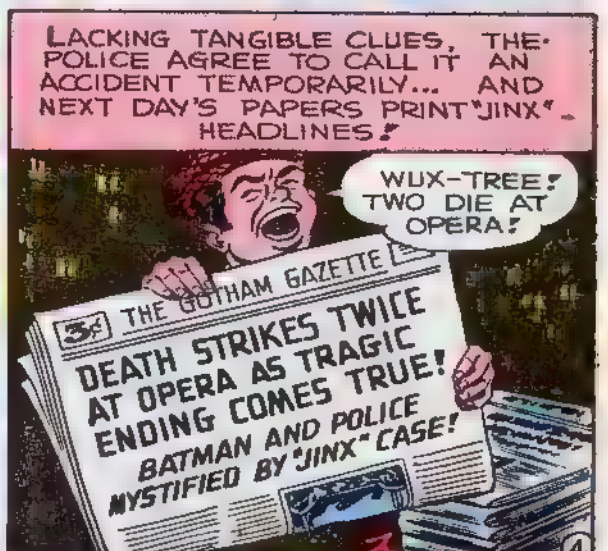
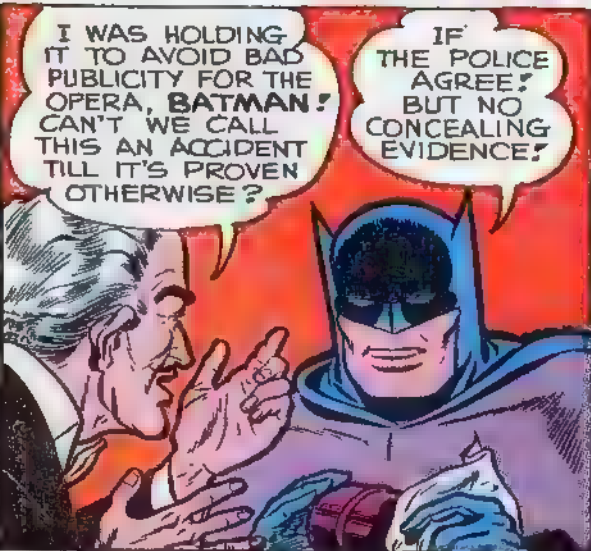
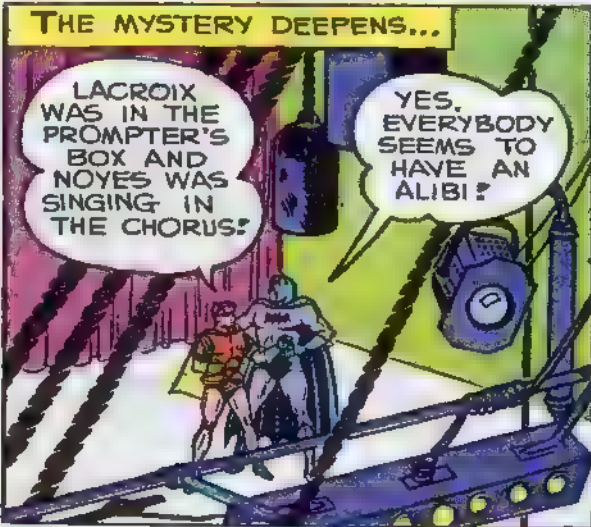
AND HIDING
IT UNDER
HIS COAT!

NEXT MOMENT...



BATMAN AND ROBIN!
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE!
I'M SURE THAT GAS
WAS MEANT TO KILL
ME -- NOT THOSE
TWO!

BUT WHO'D
WANT TO
KILL YOU,
VANNING?



TOSCA IS THE NEXT OPERA ON THE BILL...AND TWO SPECTATORS ARRIVE EARLY TO CONCEAL THEMSELVES HIGH ABOVE THE STAGE!

EVERYTHING'S READY-AND THE STAGEHANDS ARE OUT TO SUPPER!

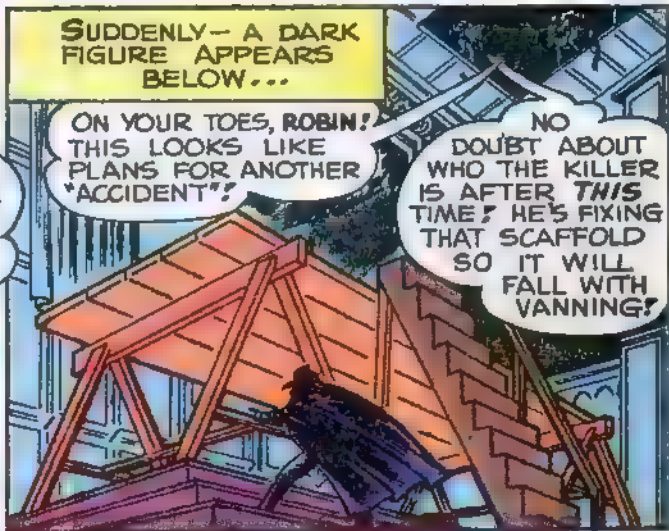
WHEN THE CURTAIN RISES, COLIN VANNING, AS MARIO, WILL BE ON THAT SCAFFOLD, PAINTING A MURAL!



SUDDENLY— A DARK FIGURE APPEARS BELOW...

ON YOUR TOES, ROBIN! THIS LOOKS LIKE PLANS FOR ANOTHER "ACCIDENT"!

NO DOUBT ABOUT WHO THE KILLER IS AFTER **THIS** TIME! HE'S FIXING THAT SCAFFOLD SO IT WILL FALL WITH VANNING!



LIKE GRIM BIRDS OF PREY, THE DUO SWOOPS—BUT THEIR QUARRY IS NOT TO BE TAKEN BY SURPRISE!

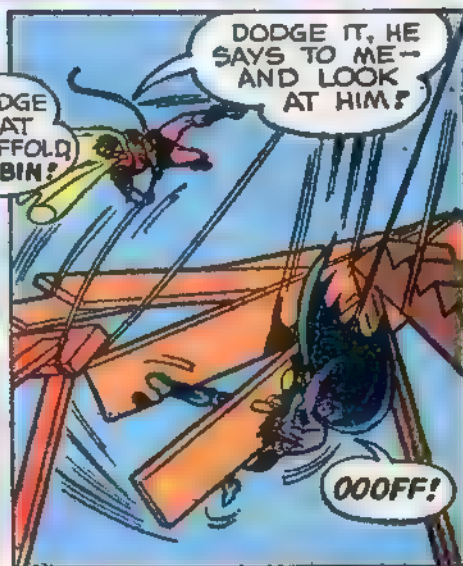
BATMAN! YOU'LL NEVER CATCH ME!



DODGE THAT SCAFFOLD, ROBIN!

DODGE IT, HE SAYS TO ME— AND LOOK AT HIM!

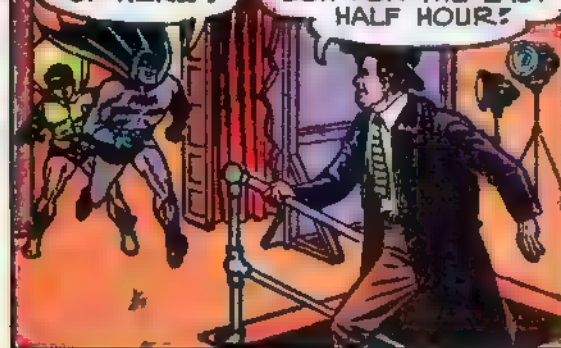
OOOFF!



SECONDS LATER, AS THEY RUN OFF-STAGE ...

CROWLEY? DID YOU MEET ANYBODY RUNNING OUT OF HERE?

NO. I'VE BEEN DRAPED OVER MY FAVORITE JUKE BOX FOR THE LAST HALF HOUR!



AFTER A FUTILE SEARCH, THE DYNAMIC DUO WATCHES AND WAITS AS THE OPERA NEARS THE LAST, FATAL SCENE...

THE FIRING SQUAD FOR THE MOCK EXECUTION OF MARIO... I LOADED THE GUNS—WITH BLANKS—SO NOBODY WILL GET KILLED IN **THIS** SCENE!

LOOK! CROWLEY— AT THE TABLE WHERE THE MUSKETS WERE LAYING!



THEN CROWLEY RUSHES UP TO BATMAN...

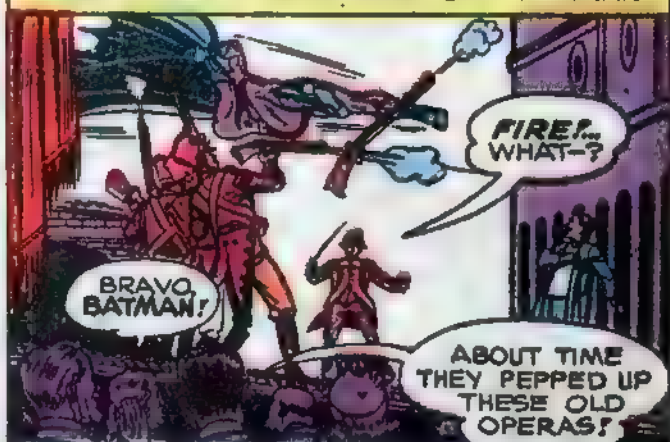
I FOUND A BLANK CARTRIDGE ON THE TABLE! WHAT IF SOMEONE PUT A REAL ONE IN ITS PLACE IN ONE OF THE MUSKETS?

GREAT SCOTT-- AND THEY'RE READY TO SHOOT!

READY-- AIM--



SHOTS RING OUT-- BUT FAR MORE THRILLING TO THE AUDIENCE IS AN UNSCHEDULED ENTRANCE BY BATMAN!



FIRE! WHAT--?

BRAVO, BATMAN!

ABOUT TIME THEY PEPPED UP THESE OLD OPERAS!

AFTER THE CURTAIN FALLS...

HERE'S THE BULLET-HOLE! SEE? IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN VANNING IF I HAD NOT INTERFERED! IT'S ME THEY'RE AFTER! AND THE KILLER IS SOMEONE ON THIS STAGE!



THE BARREL OF NOYES' MUSKET SHOWS IT FIRED A REAL BULLET!

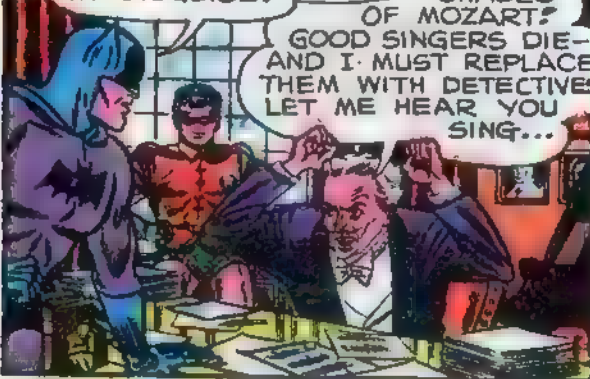
CROWLEY HAS CHARGE OF THE PROPS AND HE HANDED ME THAT MUSKET!



LATER, IN MANAGER LACROIX'S OFFICE...

WE'LL TRY A NEW STRATEGY TO SOLVE THIS CASE, LACROIX! ROBIN AND I WILL SING IN YOUR NEXT OPERA-- IN DISGUISE!

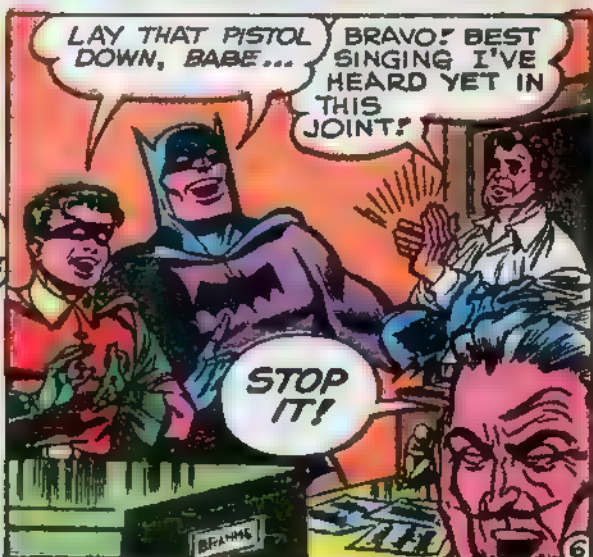
SHADES OF MOZART! GOOD SINGERS DIE-- AND I MUST REPLACE THEM WITH DETECTIVES! LET ME HEAR YOU SING...

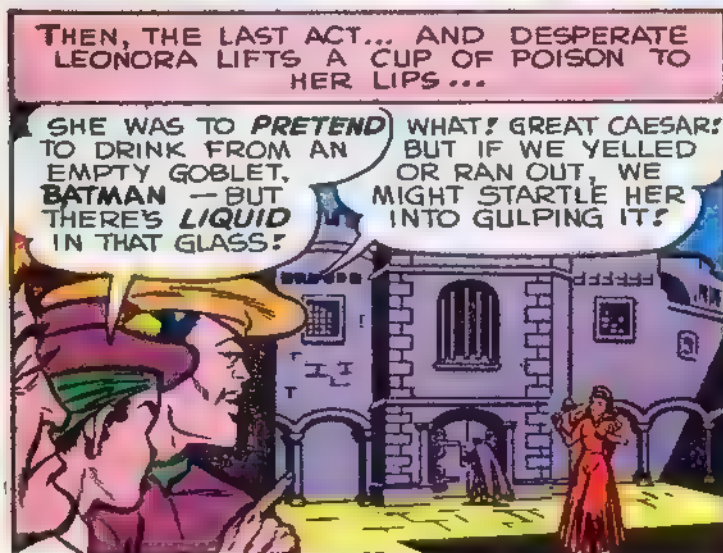
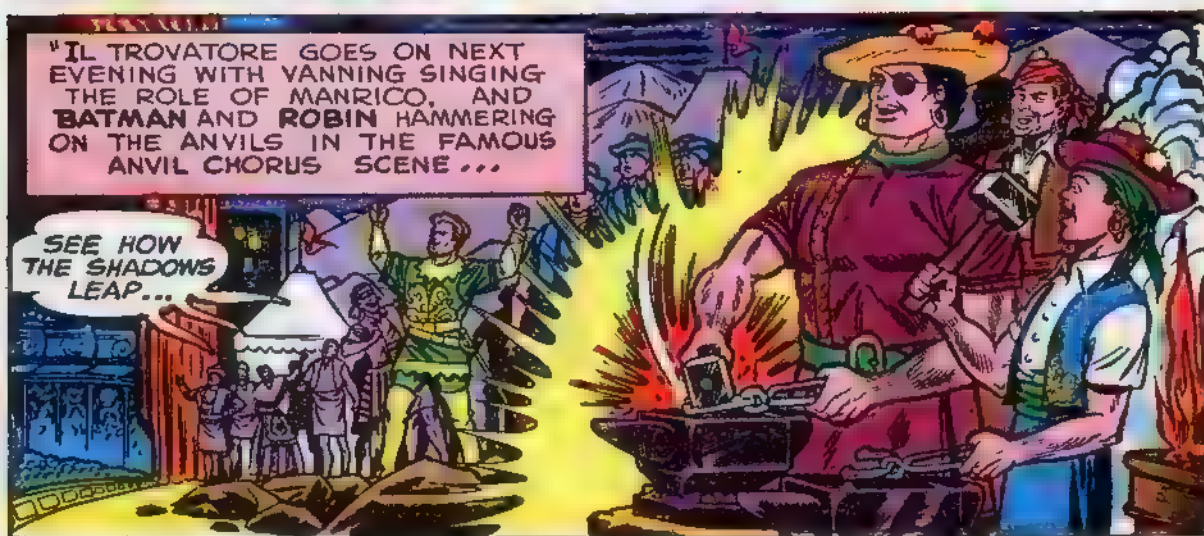
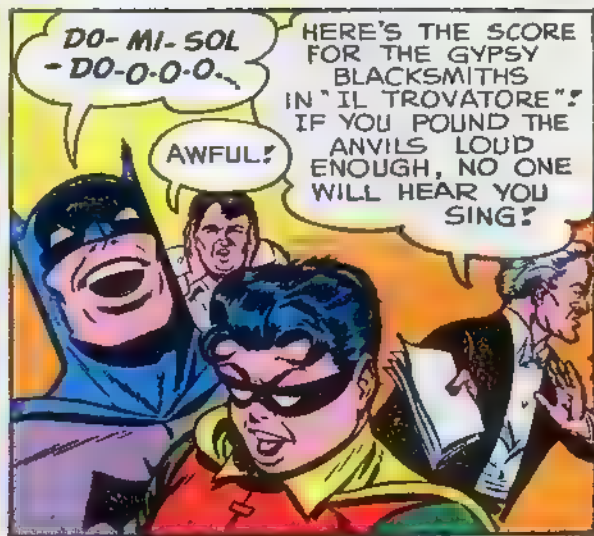
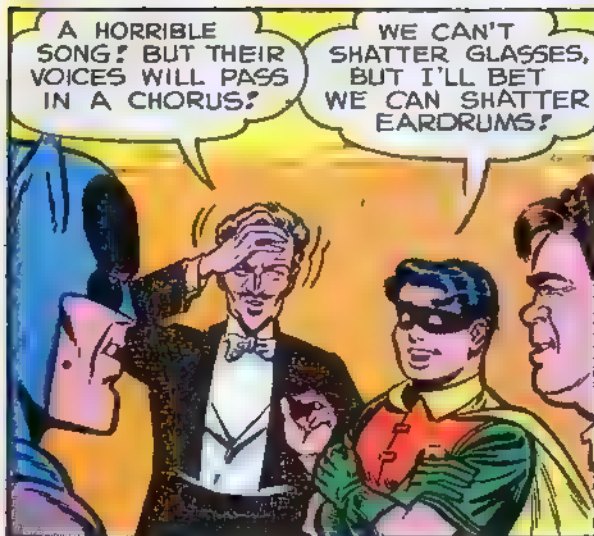


LAY THAT PISTOL DOWN, BABE...

BRAVO! BEST SINGING I'VE HEARD YET IN THIS JOINT!

STOP IT!





AND A SINGLE, MAGNIFICENT, PIERCING NOTE FILLS THE THEATER AS LEONORA HESITATES, THE GOBLET VIBRATING IN HER HAND...



SO LEONORA DOES NOT DRINK— BUT PRETENDS DEATH ANYWAY AS THE DEATH OF MANRICO IS ENACTED...

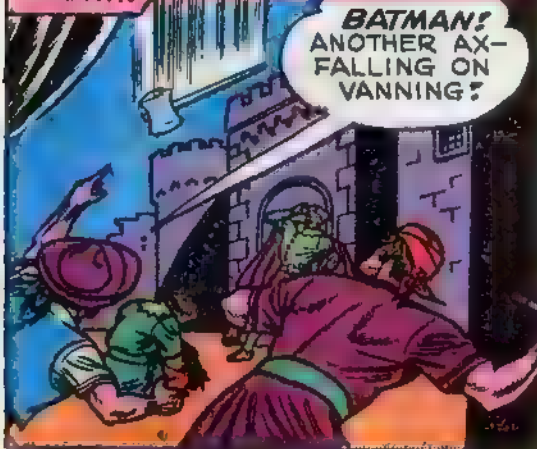
THE COUNT IS CONDEMNING THE TROUBADOUR TO DEATH... NOW I'LL TAKE THE HEADSMAN'S PART!

THEN WE CAN BE SURE THE AX WON'T DO ANY REAL DAMAGE!



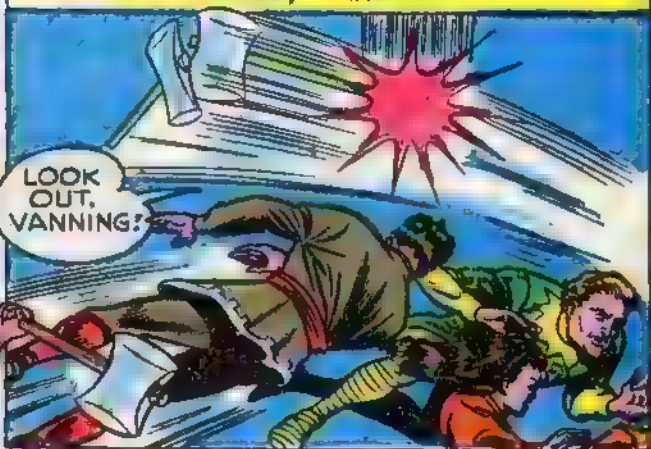
SUDDENLY, A CLOCKWORK MECHANISM CLICKS HIGH ABOVE THE STAGE... THEN...

BATMAN! ANOTHER AX-FALLING ON VANNING?



AS STEEL CLASHES ON STEEL IN MID-AIR, NOYES LEAPS FROM THE WINGS, AND...

LOOK OUT, VANNING!



THE HEAVY AXES MISS VANNING— BUT HE DOES NOT RISE FROM WHERE HE HAS FALLEN!

HE'S UNCONSCIOUS? GET A DOCTOR!

DR. INGRAM— VANNING'S PHYSICIAN— IS IN THE AUDIENCE!

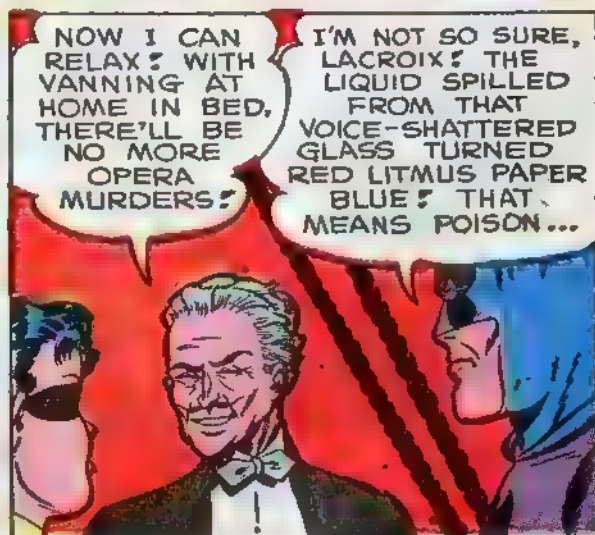
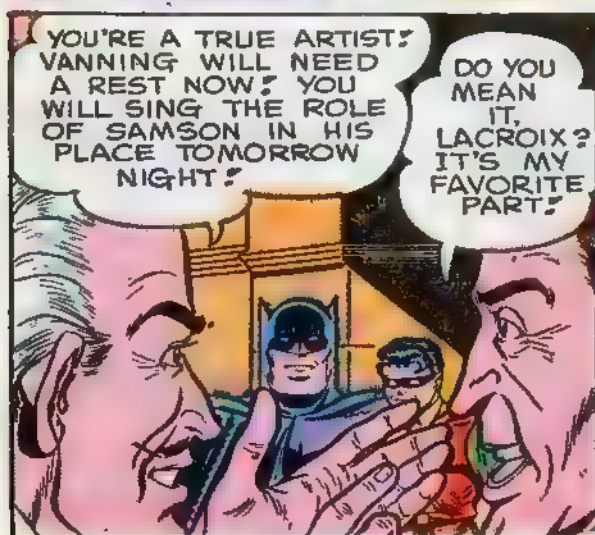
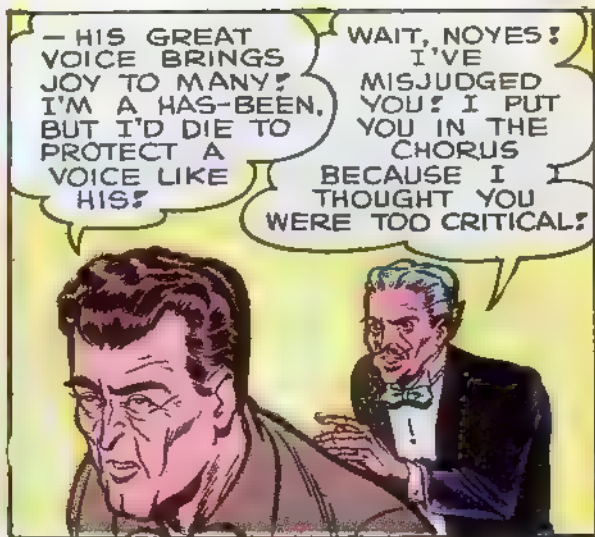
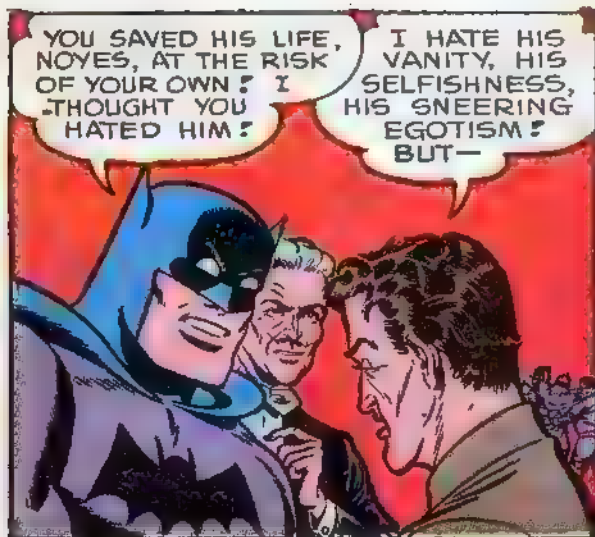


BUT FATE IS NOT READY FOR COLIN VANNING TO DIE...

WH-WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU FAINTED? I WARNED YOU AGAINST THE TERRIFIC STRAIN ON YOUR HEART WHEN YOU SING THAT GLASS SHATTERING NOTE!



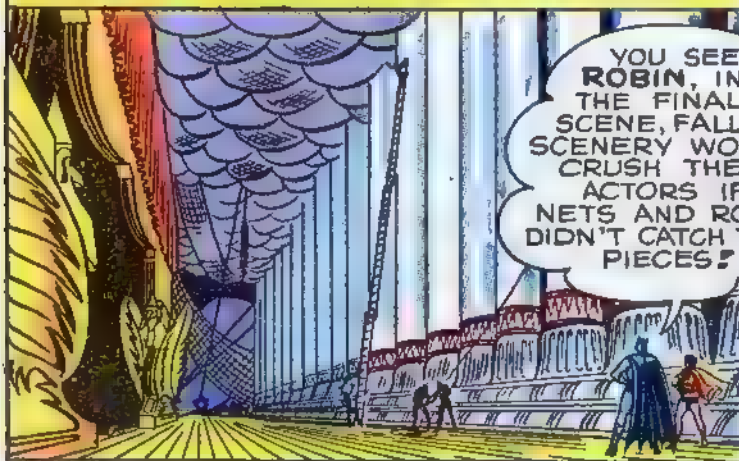


MADMAN... PHANTOM...

LECROIX'S SHOCKED WORDS ECHO IN NEWSPAPER HEADLINES AND RADIO NEWSCASTS...

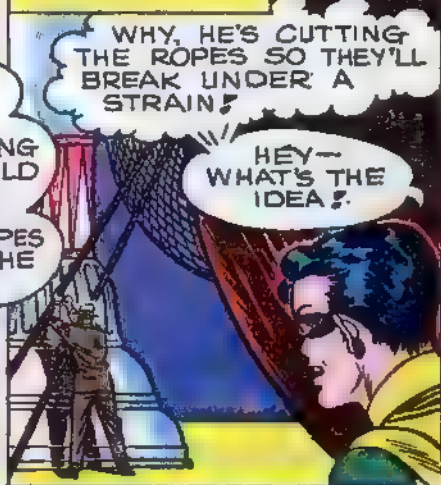
MEANWHILE, GOTHAMITES OFFER FANTASTIC SUMS FOR TICKETS TO "SAMSON AND DELILAH" — THE OPERATIC VERSION OF ONE OF HISTORY'S MOST FAMOUS TALES OF TREACHERY AND VENGEANCE.

NEXT DAY, BATMAN AND ROBIN WATCH PREPARATIONS FOR THE BIG SPECTACLE...



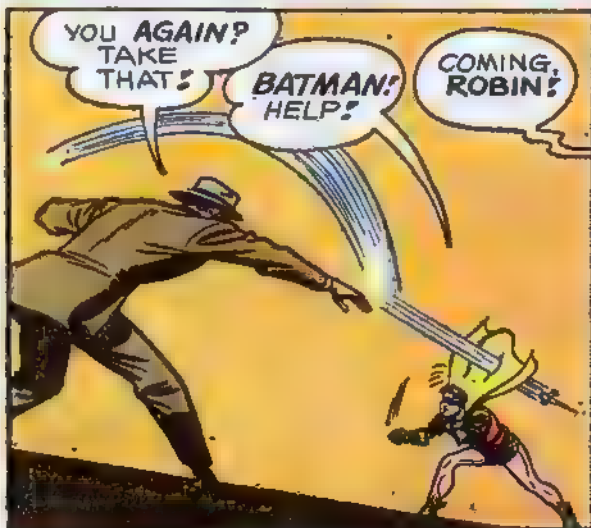
YOU SEE, ROBIN, IN THE FINAL SCENE, FALLING SCENERY WOULD CRUSH THE ACTORS IF NETS AND ROPES DIDN'T CATCH THE PIECES!

PRESENTLY...



WHY, HE'S CUTTING THE ROPES SO THEY'LL BREAK UNDER A STRAIN!

HEY—WHAT'S THE IDEA?



YOU AGAIN? TAKE THAT!

BATMAN! HELP!

COMING, ROBIN!



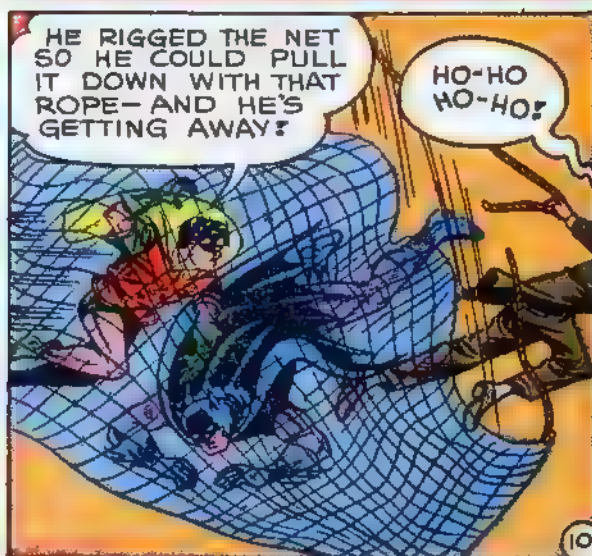
THANKS, PAL!

HE'S NOT AS GOOD AT DODGING AS YOU ARE!



OOOH-H-H!

I'LL MAKE HIM SORRY FOR THAT!



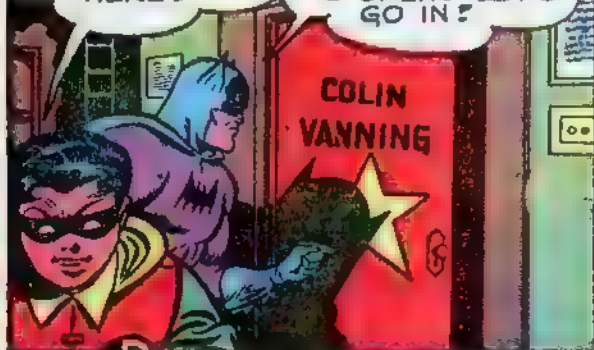
HE RIGGED THE NET SO HE COULD PULL IT DOWN WITH THAT ROPE—AND HE'S GETTING AWAY!

HO-HO HO-HO!

ONCE MORE, THE DYNAMIC DUO SEARCHES BACKSTAGE IN VAIN!

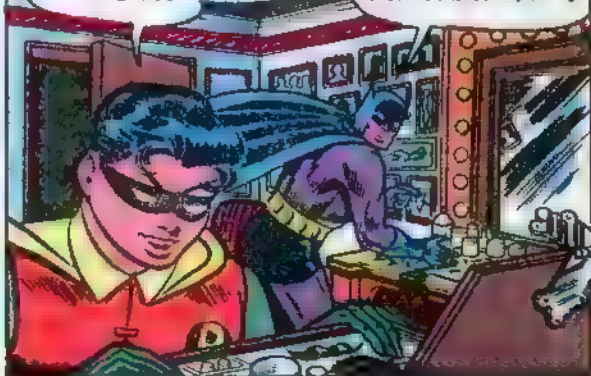
MUST BE A THOUSAND HIDING PLACES HERE!

HMM—THE DOOR OF VANNING'S DRESSING ROOM IS OPEN! LET'S GO IN!



OH, BOY, WHAT A MAKE-UP KIT! PAINTS, PUTTY, FALSE WIGS AND WHISKERS, NOSTRIL PLUGS, AND...

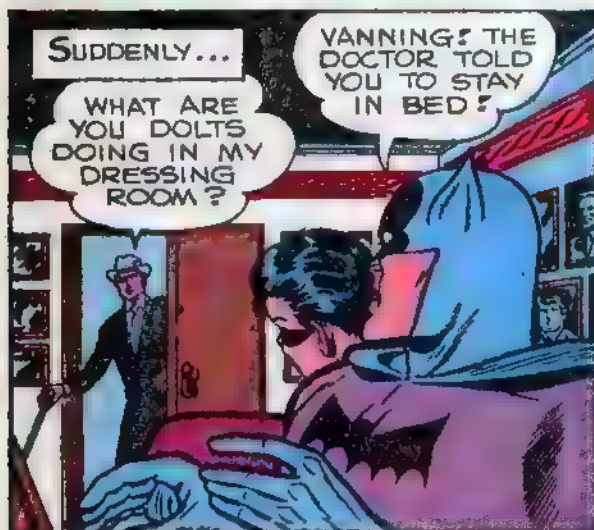
NOSTRIL PLUGS? HMM... HEY—LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT THAT KIT!



SUDDENLY...

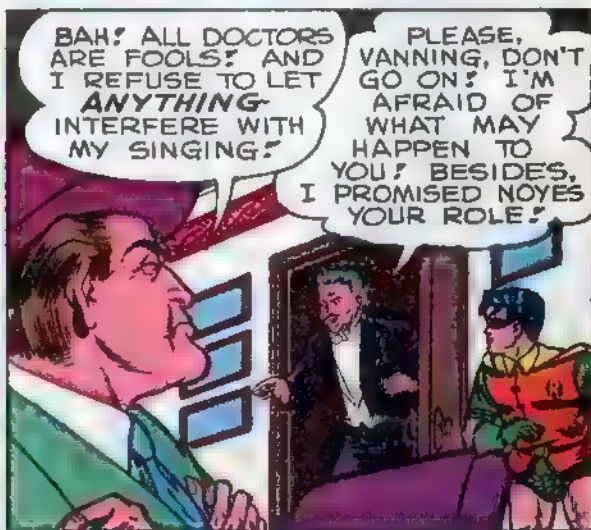
WHAT ARE YOU DOLTS DOING IN MY DRESSING ROOM?

VANNING! THE DOCTOR TOLD YOU TO STAY IN BED!



BAH! ALL DOCTORS ARE FOOLS! AND I REFUSE TO LET **ANYTHING** INTERFERE WITH MY SINGING!

PLEASE, VANNING, DON'T GO ON! I'M AFRAID OF WHAT MAY HAPPEN TO YOU! BESIDES, I PROMISED NOYES YOUR ROLE!



LET NOYES SING THE SECOND TENOR LEAD! AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING!

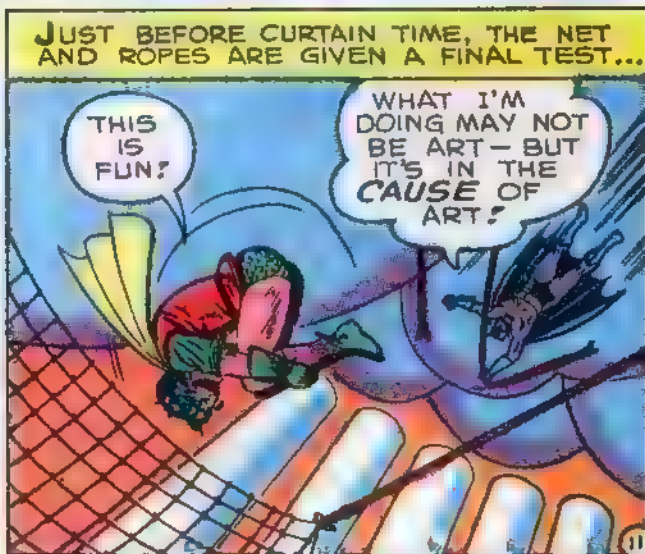
I THINK HE DOES, AT THAT, LACROIX! LET HIM SING!



JUST BEFORE CURTAIN TIME, THE NET AND ROPES ARE GIVEN A FINAL TEST...

THIS IS FUN!

WHAT I'M DOING MAY NOT BE ART—BUT IT'S IN THE **CAUSE OF ART!**

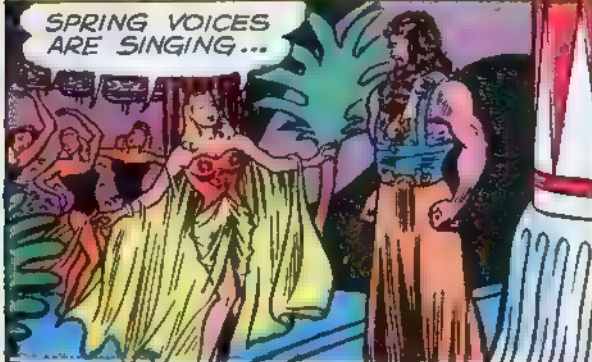




THEN—ON WITH THE SHOW? AND AS THE MIGHTY SAMSON IS LULLED BY THE SONG OF THE BEAUTIFUL DELILAH...

FINALLY, AS SAMSON IS SHORN OF HIS STRENGTH-GIVING LOCKS AND BLINDED...

SPRING VOICES ARE SINGING...

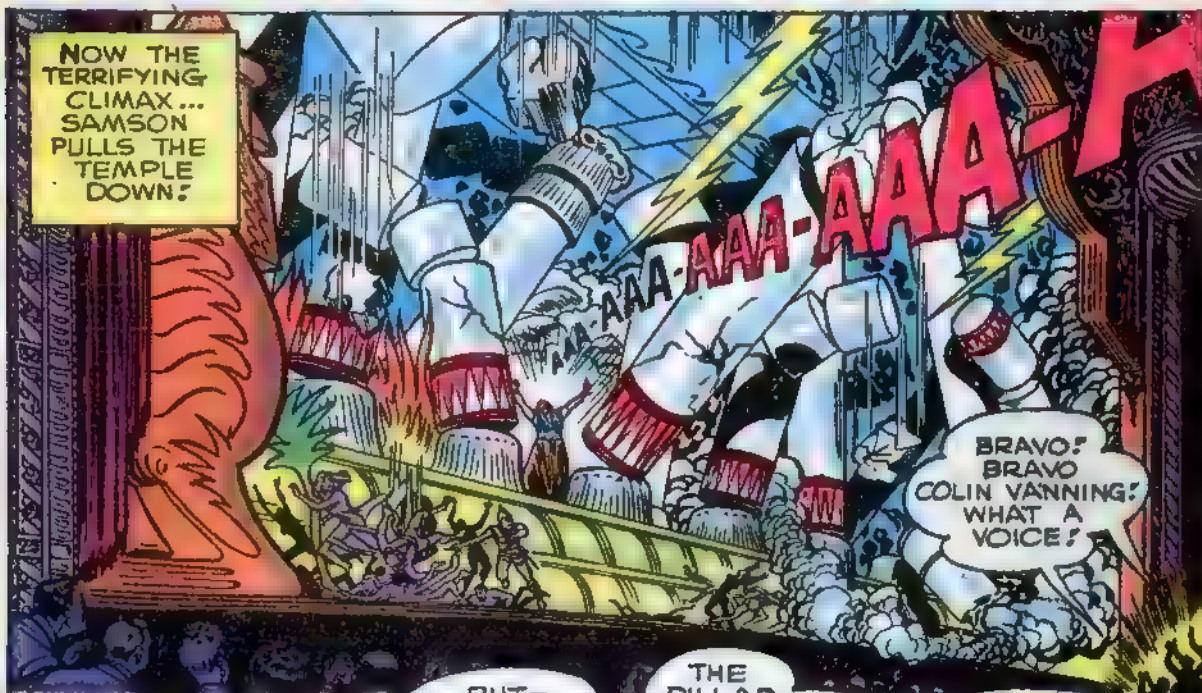


O FEEBLE GIANT, SING US A SONG IN PRAISE OF DELILAH!



GIVE ME BUT A MOMENT OF MY STRENGTH...

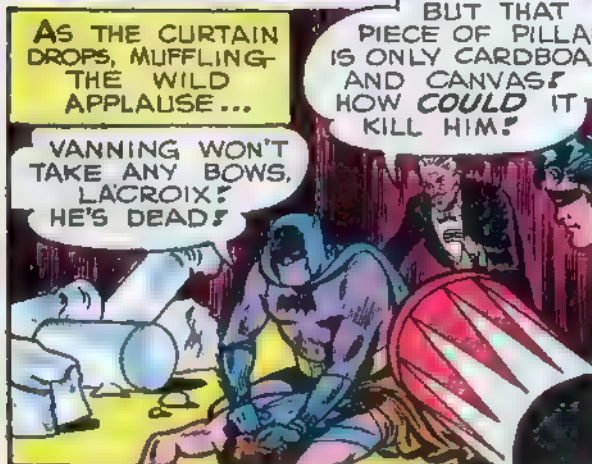
NOW THE TERRIFYING CLIMAX... SAMSON PULLS THE TEMPLE DOWN!



AAA-AAA-AAA-K

BRAVO! BRAVO COLIN VANNING! WHAT A VOICE!

AS THE CURTAIN DROPS, MUFFLING THE WILD APPLAUSE...

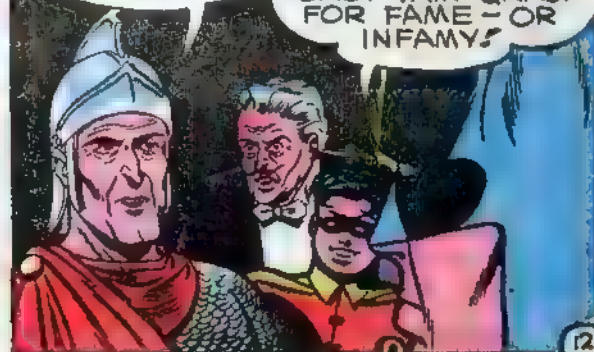


VANNING WON'T TAKE ANY BOWS, LACROIX! HE'S DEAD!

BUT— BUT THAT PIECE OF PILLAR IS ONLY CARDBOARD AND CANVAS! HOW COULD IT KILL HIM?

THE PILLAR DIDN'T KILL HIM! VANNING SANG HIMSELF TO DEATH!

NOYES IS RIGHT! HE COMMITTED SUICIDE IN A LAST VAIN GRASP FOR FAME—OR INFAMY!



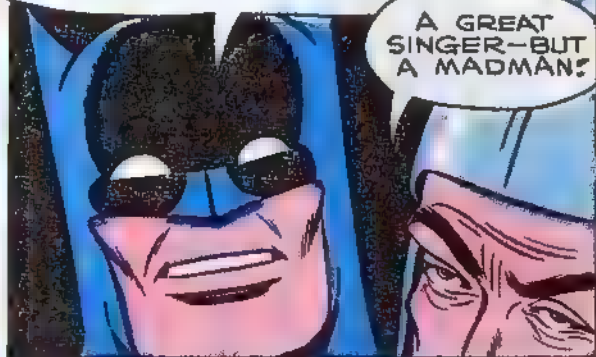
VANNING RELEASED THAT POISON GAS THE FIRST NIGHT, WEARING NOSTRIL PLUGS TO SAVE HIMSELF! HE WANTED TO KILL OTHERS BEFORE HIMSELF!

BUT WHY?



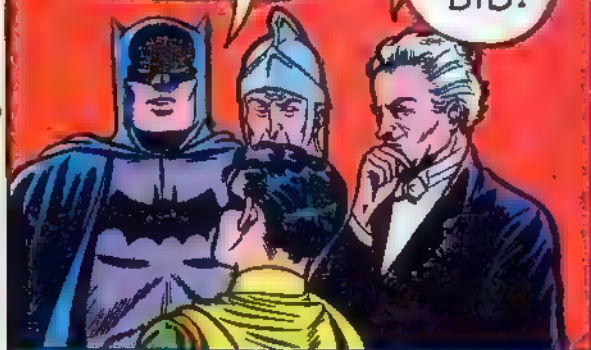
HIS HEART AILMENT WOULD HAVE FORCED HIS RETIREMENT SOON! SO HE PLANNED TO DIE—AND TO TAKE WITH HIM THOSE WHO WOULD CONTINUE TO GET THE APPLAUSE HE LOVED.

A GREAT SINGER—BUT A MADMAN!



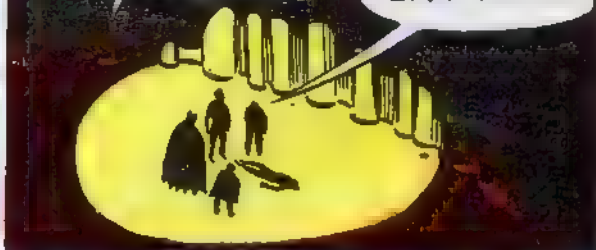
HE WAS AN EGOMANIAC! HE WANTED TO DIE—SPECTACULARLY SO THAT HE WOULD BE REMEMBERED!

AND HE DID!



WHEN HE HAD THAT STROKE LAST NIGHT, HE REALIZED HE COULD BURST HIS HEART, AS HE SHATTERED GOBLETS, WITH THAT TERRIFIC NOTE! TONIGHT, HE SANG THAT NOTE—BUT LOUDER AND LONGER...

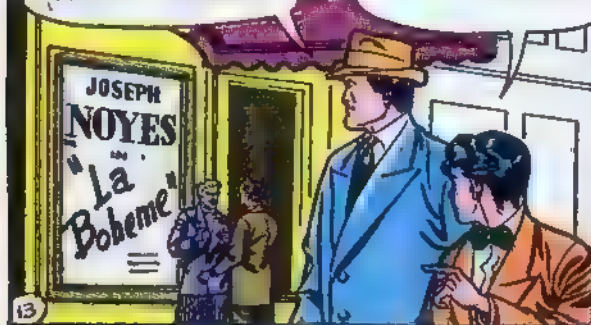
UNTIL HIS HEART SHATTERED!



SO ENDS OUR STORY, AS TRAGICALLY AS ANY OPERA! AND ANOTHER EVENING ...

NOYES RATES THE BREAKS HE'S GETTING! HE HASN'T VANNING'S COLOR, BUT HE'S A GREAT TENOR!

TAKE A LOOK, BRUCE! THERE'S CROWLEY AND LACROIX!



BUT I NEED YOU AT REHEARSAL, CROWLEY!

SEE MY ASSISTANT! I NEED SOME JUKE-BOX JIVE TO FORTIFY ME AGAINST TONIGHT'S SCREECHING!



Two of America's
Most Famous Boys!



ROBIN
-THE BOY WONDER-

TWO-FISTED ACTION-PAL
OF FAMOUS, HARD-HITTING

BATMAN

NOW

ON HIS OWN
IN SINGLE-HANDED COMBAT
AGAINST THE UNDERWORLD!

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THE **GAHOON**

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